

## **Disciple of Christ Acceptance Letter and Lesson One**

*We are pleased to welcome you into the CLI Disciple of Christ Study!* God has put us together to honor and serve Christ. We are delighted to be part of your life and help you grow healthier and stronger in your Christian walk. Sometimes it may seem like a difficult journey but it is well worth any hardship or sacrifice. There is nothing greater in this life or the next that can compare to a vibrant and loving relationship with our triune God.

We know God loves you and has a great plan for your life. Therefore we desire to help you in developing and continually keeping God's plan in front of you. We know God's intention is for you to live your life as a disciple of Christ and intentionally make disciples for Him. In fact, the greatest legacy that you or I will leave behind is the disciples we have made.

We at CLI are disciples but we are not perfect nor do we have all the answers. However, we love God and strive to please and serve Him daily. If we waited for only perfect disciplers, we would have a very long wait indeed! You must keep this in mind as you set out to disciple others. Our enemy, Satan, would love to make us feel so unworthy that we do nothing. It is an old trick that has worked well for him. You, however, will be aware of his schemes and help many to follow Christ.

We will learn from each other as we hold each other accountable. You have gifts and talents that we do not and vice versa. For example, God may give you a Bible verse or a word that we need to hear. May we never be too "holy" to receive a word from another saint. You have a bright future in God's kingdom, and we are blessed to be a small part of it.

In Jesus,



Kathleen Skaar  
Executive Director

All Scripture used in this study is from *The NIV Study Bible*, 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, Kenneth Barker, General Editor, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1995.

## ***Disciple of Christ Study: Lesson 1, Position in the Kingdom***

**Purpose of study:** *Live life as a disciple of Christ and intentionally make disciples for the glory of the triune God. A disciple is a "student" or "follower" who learns, studies, and acts in accordance to the teachings of Christ, the Master.*

### **Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom (Day One) *Share in Jesus' Suffering***

I was paying bills one day when I noticed a late charge on the statement. This was an error. Not only am I careful to pay bills on time, I had a record of when it was sent. I called the credit card company and kindly explained the situation. No matter how I reasoned, the representative would not take off the charge.

I was angry and frustrated by the time our conversation ended. Anders, my husband, walks in about this time and wants to know "what's going on." After telling him the situation, he takes the bill and comes back a few minutes later with the news: the late fee had been removed from our bill. *How did he do that?*

Some people seem to have a personality for getting what they want. As we will see in our lesson today, Zebedee's sons, James and John, wanted something from Jesus. They wanted special positions in the new kingdom. It was a big and audacious (daring) request.

Known as the "sons of thunder," they were not lacking in boldness. However, this high position was not something to be demanded, but requested. This petition called for finesse (skill). Perhaps they did not think they had the relational graces to succeed. But aha, they may have thought, "mother always gets her way; let's get her to ask Jesus."

We might wonder if James and John were frustrated with their positions and influence among the other disciples. Since they were fishermen by trade, they did not have an abundance of power and authority within their community. Now was their opportunity to make a change.

**1. Share a time when you felt unnoticed and unappreciated:**

**\*\*See end of lesson for repeat of questions and blank spaces for you to write your answers.**  
*When all the questions have been completed, return your answer sheets to CLI. You may keep this lesson for your own study or review. You also may pass it on to another or discard.*

**2. Would you like to have a position of authority and respect? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)**

There have been times when I have felt like James and John, wanting power and respect. This is the way the way the world thinks. However, God views positions of authority and respect differently. In fact, opposite to the world's view.

Jesus had just told His disciples that He was going to be betrayed, scourged and crucified. Suffering and death awaited Him in Jerusalem. The disciples had such a worldly view, they were in such a human frame of mind, that they totally ignored what Jesus had just predicted.

**Read Matthew 20:20-28 and Mark 10:32-34** (Scripture not listed, please read from Bible)

We see from the text that Jesus used the occasion of James and John's request for position in the Kingdom to teach all the disciples that position equals service to each other. Jesus teaches us that to attain position in the Kingdom of God we must serve others. The world and God's Kingdom have different sets of values and attitudes. Our job is to learn Kingdom values and in this way, our real need can be met.

**3.** At this point in your Christian life, how well do you think you are living out Kingdom values and serving others? Rate yourself, with 1 being just beginning and 10 as living perfectly by Kingdom values and attitudes. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circle One) Explain your rating:

**Jesus teaches us *three principles* about attaining position in God's kingdom:**

**I. Position in God's kingdom requires us to share in Jesus' suffering.**

Right after James and John's mother kneels and makes their request, Jesus answers the sons in verse 22. He answers the sons because He knows they are the ones really behind the request. In effect, Jesus is saying, "You think you are asking for a royal and effortless position but that is not how it works."

He then asks James and John, "Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" This Jewish expression meant to share someone's fate (destiny, future). Jesus had the cross in front of Him and would be suffering for the sins of the world.

However, Jesus did not mean they would die for the sins of mankind, because He alone can do that. His position as the Son of God and Savior of mankind cannot be shared. Jesus *was* referring to His suffering, pain and rejection at the hands of evil men.

**4.** Are you willing to suffer, experience pain, and be rejected by other people because of Jesus?  
Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

**5.** If you have suffered because of your relationship with Jesus, please share what happened:

Jesus also asked, "Are you able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" In Jewish history, baptism meant, "to go down" or "to perish." It came to be known as suffering and death. Jesus wanted to know if they were willing to follow Him into death for God's purposes.

James and John did not understand the fate that awaited Jesus, nor for themselves. Nevertheless, they replied in unison, "Yes, we are able." Perhaps we are all like James and John, *ready to follow Jesus and not knowing exactly what that means.*

Tara was from a very prominent, wealthy, and strict Pakistani family. When she was 12 years old, she saw an ad in the newspaper and sent off for something free. It turned out to be a Bible with correspondence lessons. The packages were delivered to the servants and then given to

Tara. She did not see the harm in completing the Bible study but still had the sense not tell anyone about it. She hid the Bible and lessons in her bedroom.<sup>1</sup>

When she was 16, because of her exceptional grades, she was invited to a special study class in Iran. Her brother accompanied her. While walking through the courtyard of her hotel, she came across a man looking into the sky and apparently talking with someone.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"I'm talking to God." he answered.

"You can't talk to God," Tara argued, laughing.

"He will not come down to speak with you, and you cannot go up to Him unless you die."

"I not only spoke with God, I got an answer."

"You are not a prophet or an angel. How could you possibly get an answer from God?"

He invited her to come to a special location to learn more. She convinced her brother it was "religious" research and he allowed her to go; he waited outside. While she was there, a father brought his crippled daughter to the front of the gathering and everyone started praying for God to heal the girl.

Tara couldn't believe what she saw. The crippled girl's legs slowly straightened, she stood and then walked down the center aisle of the church and looking into Tara's eyes said, "Emmanuel." Then she walked back to her father.

When Tara returned to Pakistan, she studied the Bible in secret and tried to find answers. She found another Christian church, but she would learn that all Christians are not alike. The pastor of this church, was more concerned for his own safety than for her salvation. Being responsible for someone converting to Christianity could mean a death sentence. So he called Tara's father and told him of her interest in Christianity.

Her father was furious and went into a rage. Even though she denied being a Christian, he struck her again and again. "You are no longer my daughter!" Her brother joined in the beating. They found the Bible and grew even more angry. They beat her with an electric cord and whatever else they could find.

Afterward, they removed everything from her bedroom, including furniture and clothing, and left her battered and bloody body in a heap on the floor. They decided to marry her off and have her retrained. In fact, her father's last words to her were: "Either you marry or you die!"

She laid on the floor for three days and when she finally lifted her head, she found her hair was stuck to the floor in dried blood. Tara uttered her first prayer to the one and only true God. "God, I don't know what to do. Please show me and I will follow you."

Tara did not know what following God would mean. Nor did she know what He would ask her to do. Perhaps it would mean that her father would change his mind or show some interest in

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<sup>1</sup> The Voice of the Martyrs, *Hearts of Fire*, W Publishing, pp. 159-192, Nashville, 2003.

Christianity. She had seen God heal a crippled child and certainly He had the power to change a man's will.

6. Even though Tara was not a professed Christian, how is she an example of sharing in Jesus' suffering?

**Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Two) *Putting God's Plans First*

In Mark 8:30-34, Jesus was teaching about His suffering and rejection by the chief priests and teachers of the Law when Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked (scolded, reprimanded) Him.

*But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."<sup>34</sup> Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Mark 8:33-34*

7. Memorize: *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. Luke 9:23*

Peter, like James and John, did come to understand what it meant to take up his cross and follow Jesus. Peter and James suffered and were martyred (died) for their faith. John also shared in Jesus' suffering through exile on the Island of Patmos.

We have to change our mindset on what the world says is a high position. Instead we must seek a high position according to how Jesus describes it. It means putting God's plans first no matter the suffering and rejection.

As we begin to change our mindset, we will be tempted to feel sorry for ourselves. The life of humility is not an easy one because of our fleshly desire for recognition and popularity. In the world's eyes, Tara had every right to self-pity. But she did not go down that path.

Notice also that she did not start blaming God. either. Even though she had been beaten senseless by her own father and brother, she did not say, "God, You must not be real," or "You must not love me because I was reading your Book and seeking after you and this is what you allow to happen to me." Instead she prayed for God's will and direction.

After Tara had prayed, she felt strangely peaceful and fell into a deep sleep. After a while she felt someone lifting her head and softly caressing her cheek. She heard a voice saying, "Emmanuel, Emmanuel."

The presence of the Lord Jesus had entered into this battered girl's room to assure her that He was with her. Emmanuel is one of Jesus' names and it means "God with us." Just as Jesus was with His disciples on earth, He is with us through His Holy Spirit.

Even though Tara was not a Christian, she was following the direction the Lord was leading her. She did the Bible studies, and she followed up leads about other Christians. Her obedience did

not make her popular, safe or powerful. She was beaten to a pulp and had been given an ultimatum to marry or die. In her mind, this would mean her search for God would be over. She put truth first and obediently made plans to leave her home.

She searched her room and found only one thing her father and brother had missed: a small travel bag from her last trip to Iran. It had some clothes, money and her passport. She changed out of her bloody clothes and slipped out her bedroom window.

Tara made her way to the bus station and bought a one way ticket to a city several hours away. She had been to this city with her family and had noticed a church there. But her troubles were not over. Some of the women of the church were jealous of her youth and beauty. They started false rumors and soon she was not welcome. In addition, her father and brother had come into town making their intentions known: *They were going to kill her.*

Nevertheless, with all this going on, she came to understand the real meaning of Emmanuel. She knew Jesus had come to earth to save her from her sins so she could be with God. A couple of months after she had left her home, she trusted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. With Jesus in her heart, she set off for a new start and another town.

Putting God and His plans first *does not* mean that we will be free of difficult, even tragic, circumstances in our lives. It *does* mean that He is working in us to shape our character and make us like Jesus. And Jesus has prepared a place for us in heaven where all pain and hardships are forgotten; joy is constant.

**8.** List three Bible references that counsel us to put God and His plans first:

Tara kept thinking about God and what He wanted. In the new city, she finally found a pastor who had her best interests at heart. She was able to live with his family four and a half years and work as the church's secretary. Tara also started a literacy program and a children's ministry at the church. She brought in many new members as she shared the good news of Jesus Christ.

But again, a family member recognized her and she was on the run. She has had to live a secret life for 15 years now. She has been imprisoned, betrayed several more times by "church members" as well as others, but still she clings to Jesus. She thinks about God's will and presence in her life.

God may or may not answer our prayers in the way we would choose, but He is still good and wants the best for us. Tara's *great* reward will be in heaven, but God has blessed her on earth, also. She has felt His presence and seen miracles that few ever experience. God has also given her a wonderful Christian husband and they now have a baby son.

God is sovereign (supreme ruler). When Jesus was falsely accused, He was brought before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. He knew His suffering and circumstances were not in Pilate's hands but ultimately God's. Whether or not pain and suffering were involved, Jesus always put His Father's plans first. So when Pilate asked, "Do you refuse to speak to me?" "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" (John 19:10)

*Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above."*  
John 19:11a

**9. Memorize John 19:11a.**

We can be the cause of our own heartaches and troubles. In other words, we must not invent or make up suffering that we have brought upon ourselves. Our wrongdoing, no matter what form it takes, is not suffering with Christ.

Now when the other ten disciples heard about James and John's request, they were not happy. They were also thinking in worldly terms and most likely wanted a position of authority or dominance for themselves.

Jesus saw this as a perfect opportunity to teach them kingdom principles. Not only does position in God's Kingdom require us to share in Jesus' suffering, but it means:

**II. Position in God's kingdom is not about dominating others.**

**Definition:** Dominate is a verb meaning to have control, power or authority over somebody or something. It is also defined as having a commanding influence over someone.

Jesus uses the expression "lord it over," which means to rule over like lords or to be domineering. Lords were the masters or leaders during that time period. They enjoyed their positions and gave no thought to the needs, feelings or welfare of those under them. Jesus uses an example of the rulers of the Gentiles as a word picture so the disciples could immediately understand this particular type of behavior. The disciples were able to picture a man in a commanding position, an oppressor full of pride and haughtiness. Jesus is emphatic (forceful and definite) and says they will not "lord it over" others.

Dominating or oppressing others is a continuing problem that can have long-term and detrimental (harmful) effects. After I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I shared this good news with everyone I knew. One of those I shared with was named Joanne. We were having a nice lunch and enjoying each other's company when I began to talk about Jesus. She threw her fork down on her plate and told me she did not want to hear it!

Visibly angry and irritated, she told me that she "grew up" in the church, where her father was an elder. They would go to church every week acting like everything was wonderful while in their home, her father was abusing her and her mother.

Finally, her mother got enough courage to go to the pastor for help. He said basically that the husband was the ruler of the home and she just had to live with that. Joanne snarled that she would *never* darken the door of any church, especially this denomination. Please let the Holy Spirit lead you in saying a prayer for Joanne and any living family members. Thank you. Both the husband and the pastor were setting up false dominating positions that have no place for Christ's disciples. Position in God's kingdom is not about dominating others, even if we are not

criminally abusing them. A domineering spirit is a spirit of pride. It says, "I want my way and I don't care how it affects you." But God says, *Better to be lowly in spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud* (Proverbs 16:19).

**10.** If you were the pastor when Joanne's mother had asked for help, how would *you* have handled the situation as a disciple of Christ?

**11.** Prayerfully consider and answer: Do you have a dominating or domineering spirit?

**12.** What will you do to develop a more humble, modest and gentle spirit?

Having a prideful or dominating spirit must be dealt with immediately. We all have this tendency to some extent and we must acknowledge it and confess it before God. Take a moment and pray: *O God, Change my heart so that I have no desire to rule over anyone but to humbly accept the positions that You have ordained and chosen for me. Amen.*

We have learned two principles about attaining position in God's kingdom. First, position in God's kingdom requires us to share in Jesus' suffering and second, position in God's kingdom is *not* about dominating others. The third principle Jesus teaches makes it abundantly clear that He does things differently from the way worldly leaders model and direct.

### **Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Three) *Service to Others*

#### **III. Position in God's kingdom calls for compassionate, obedient service to others.**

Jesus turns everything upside down! If you want to become great, serve others to the point of acting like their slave! He is not saying it is wrong to want to be a leader or even a great leader, but the rules for prominence (importance, status) in God's kingdom will be in serving others.

**13.** How difficult is it for you to put your own needs aside and serve others?

**14.** Do you think it was difficult for Jesus to put aside His earthly needs and serve others?  
Yes No Maybe (Circle One) Please explain your answer:

**15.** Put your own interests aside and serve someone in love today. Write the circumstances of your service and what you learned:

Jesus came down from the highest position of the universe. Remember the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one, and therefore hold the identical preeminent (top) position in heaven and on earth. They created and ruled together in perfect peace, love and harmony. They were lacking nothing. Yet, Jesus came to earth to live in a human body and die for our sins. There is no greater act of compassionate, obedient service to others.

When we love Jesus and abide (dwell) in Him, we can compassionately serve others. He enables and empowers us through His Holy Spirit. Without Jesus, we are naturally selfish, self-centered and self-serving. I mean, who would really desire to be a servant or a slave to someone?

On December 21, 1948, Mother Teresa began the *Missionaries of Charity* on the streets of Calcutta, India. God alone was with her as she rounded up five puzzled children from nearby hovels (shacks). Using a stick in the dirt, she began teaching them the alphabet. She also taught how to keep clean and healthy.

In 1997, just before her death, 4,000 sisters had joined her order and over 400,000 co-workers. The *Missionaries of Charity* were in 120 Countries, feeding 500,000 families, teaching 20,000 children, treating 90,000 lepers, abused people, prostitutes and AIDS patients.

Mother Teresa might not be of the same Christian denomination as you and me and we probably would disagree on certain theological (study of God) issues, but oh, how she loved and followed Jesus. She taught her sisters from Matthew 25:40, "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" After a novice (beginner) had ministered to one of the destitute, one so repulsive that normal people could not bear to look, let alone smell such a person, Mother Teresa would take the novice's hand, palm out. One by one she folded the novice's finger and thumb back into the palm as she said these five words, "You did it to Me."

If you are interested in a better position in God's kingdom, use Mother Teresa as an example: serve others for Christ. She willingly gave her life to the dying and destitute of Calcutta as she followed her Lord. Jesus tells us in Mark 9:35, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." And again Jesus said in Matthew 20:27-28, "and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

The only way to have the strength to die to self and live for others is to dwell or remain in Jesus. Ask Him for the strength and compassion to live a life of loving service. **Pray:** *Lord Jesus, Help me to remain in You and please give me the strength and compassion to live a life of loving service to others. Amen.*

**Definition:** Legalism (legalistic) is an over-emphasis on discipline usually implying misguided strictness, pride, and superficiality (without depth of character) to the neglect of mercy and the grace of God. It overemphasizes the letter of law at the expense of the spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Without Jesus working through us, we may become legalistic about service. It becomes strictly a task, a duty, a discipline separated from God's grace. These are the kind of deeds that may not be rewarded in heaven (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

**16.** How will *you* guard against a legalistic attitude in *your* service to others?

Jesus also taught, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." (Matthew 10:39). Satisfying our own felt needs is a recipe for death. Instead, we must surrender our lives to Christ and for His service. This is how we gain eternal and abundant living now and forever.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legalism\\_\(theology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legalism_(theology))

When you put others ahead of yourselves and serve them, you will end up having your own needs met. You will *feel* significant and loved by the most powerful Person of the universe: God. Certainly God loves you, but when you know you are doing everything He asks of you, you become more conscious of His hand upon you and your place in His kingdom.

Your simplest act of kindness, like helping someone clean up a spilled drink, will not go unnoticed and unrewarded in heaven (Mark 9:41). Your position of authority comes from serving others. The more you serve in love, through Christ, the greater your position of authority in the kingdom.

We have begun our Disciple of Christ Study with three principles from Jesus' teaching as recorded in Matthew 20:25-28: I. Position in God's kingdom requires us to share in Jesus' suffering (v. 28c). II. Position in God's kingdom is not about dominating others (vs. 25-26a) and III. Position in God's kingdom calls for compassionate, obedient service to others (vs. 26b-27).

Human nature always wants to put itself first; we want to feel good about ourselves. Thus we can fall into the trap of following worldly principles, even in a church or ministry setting. Satan is adept (skillful) at helping us seek ungodly power, position and pleasure. He will tempt us to take our "felt" needs into our own hands, rather than waiting on God. Remember, God alone is the one who fills and meets our "real" needs.

These three principles set the stage for discipleship and leadership in God's kingdom. Jesus lived as He taught and He wants us to do the same. To begin living and teaching these basic discipleship principles, memorize the Master's words.

**17. Memorize:** *Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.<sup>26</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,<sup>27</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be your slave--<sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* Matthew 20:25-28

In serving others, remember to give the credit (praise, recognition) to Jesus. The Holy Spirit will lead you in acknowledging Jesus both publicly and privately. Christ did not keep it a secret that He was serving God the Father. He suffered for truth and you may, also. But you will be suffering with Christ and following in His steps.

### **Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Four) *Making Disciples*

Jesus wants us to make disciples who clearly understand and practice His teaching on "position in God's kingdom." When you and I leave this earth, the greatest legacy that we or anyone else will leave behind is this: Disciples of Christ. Your family might be your first mission field but it cannot be your only one. If you are the only Christian in your family and are ministering to them, it does not mean that you do not reach out to others at the same time. Christ's mandate (command) is making disciples of all nations.

**Read Matthew 28:18-20 and answer questions 18-22:**

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.<sup>19</sup> 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,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20*

18. Who was Jesus talking to? (see vs. 16-17 in Bible)?
19. Are you and I included in this command? Why?
20. What would have happened if the first disciples had not obeyed and acted?
21. What will happen if you and I do not obey and act?
22. What does Jesus say (vs. 18, 20) that gives *you* confidence to carry out His directive (order)?
23. Memorize Matthew 28:18-20. (Future lessons will fewer verses to memorize.)

For our discipleship plan, we will be taking key doctrines or subjects from the Bible, putting them into practice and helping others do the same. We desire to be transformed in order "to be" rather than "to seem to be" a follower of Christ.<sup>3</sup> Therefore from our very being, our very essence, we will act with undivided and pure hearts to serve Christ and bring glory to God.

**Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Five) *Doctrine of Prayer*

**Definition:** Christian doctrine is a principle, policy or rule of faith that is derived (obtained) from the pages of the entire Bible. Sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ is important to life and discipleship (1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13-14).

Prayer is a key doctrine found throughout the Bible. Even before the Bible was written, man and woman communicated with God. Prayer is personally communicating or talking with God. Everything begins and ends with prayer because everything begins and ends with God. There is nothing for us outside of, or separate from, God.

Adam and Eve had direct communication with God in the Garden of Eden both before and after they had sinned. Before they were cast out of the Garden, God promised them a Savior from Eve's blood line (Genesis 3:15). However, after their son Cain killed his brother, Abel, God had to look elsewhere for the future of mankind.

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<sup>3</sup> *Esse quam videri* is the well known Latin phrase that is translated *to be rather than to seem to be*. North Carolina adopted this saying as their state motto in 1893. It has also been a popular motto for schools.

Adam and Eve had another son and named him Seth. It was after Seth's son Enosh was born that men began to call on the name of the Lord. Prayer, or calling on the name of the LORD, would be a mark and distinctive (characteristic) of God's people from this time forward.

*Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.* Genesis 4:26

God not only delights for us to call on Him, He expects it. He wants us to ask in expectation of receiving what we ask for. In other words, He wants us to have faith that He *will* answer. When you are reading your Bible, take note of the times and reasons people call on the name of the Lord.

**24.** Do you regularly call on the name of the Lord? Why or Why not?

It is important to call on the name of the Lord in faith. 1 Chronicles 5:20 is an example of calling on the Lord and trusting Him for the outcome. We underlined a portion for emphasis.

*They were helped in fighting them, and God handed the Hagarites and all their allies over to them, because they cried out to him during the battle. He answered their prayers, because they trusted in him.* 1 Chronicles 5:20

An example of not calling on the Lord in faith is:

*Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance,<sup>14</sup> and did not inquire of the LORD. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse.* 1 Chronicles 10:13

**25.** Are there any areas of your life that you are not trusting God or need more faith? What will you do about it?

Family relationships need prayer. They can be difficult and painful for many reasons. We want to know that we are loved and belong unconditionally. But perhaps we have done things, even unknown to us, that have hurt others and have caused anger and resentment. In the same way, others may have hurt us, causing us to have sinful attitudes toward them. There are also the unbelievers in our families who need hearts opened for the truth of the gospel.

**26.** Please list your immediate family members, noting relationship and how your CLI Discipler may pray for them. Write and ask your CLI Discipler for a similar list so you may pray.

Calling on the Lord in faith is one of the basic tenets of Christianity and thus key in being a disciple of Christ. It begins by calling on the name of the Lord for salvation and restoring your relationship with God. Prayer is the beginning of discipleship. Note the words we underlined in Romans 10:9-15:

*That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.<sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.<sup>11</sup> As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."<sup>12</sup> For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile-- the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,<sup>13</sup> for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."<sup>14</sup> How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?<sup>15</sup> And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"*  
Romans 10:9-15

You are a disciple because of your relationship with Christ. However, if for any reason you are not sure you have called on the Lord for salvation and restoration, please read the above verses again. Pray to God from your heart, professing Jesus as your Lord who died for your sins and was raised from the dead. Please write to us if this is your first prayer of salvation.

The Bible records wonderful examples of Jesus praying. Let us look at His longest recorded prayer: John 17:1-25. He prayed it right before He and His disciples left and went into the Garden at Gethsemane (John 18:1-3). He wanted to shape the disciples and their prayers for success in their world changing-mission. He was setting the course for them and for us.

**Read John 17:1-25 from your Bible and answer questions 27-29:**

**27.** How did Christ pray for Himself (vs. 1-5)?

**28.** How did Christ pray for His disciples (vs. 9-17)?

**29.** How did Christ pray for all disciples, including future ones (vs. 21-26)?

Christ's prayer is for the restoration (re-establishment, return) of mankind to God. Man's relationship with God was broken (not working, lost) when Adam and Eve sinned (known as the Fall). Our mission and Christ's are identical. We make Christ known as Restorer (Redeemer, Savior, Rescuer, High Priest) of our relationship with God. We also proclaim Christ as the means of keeping our relationship with God healthy, unified and joyful.

Remember Jesus' promise: *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age* (Matthew 28:20). We are not required to do anything alone or on our own. We call on and trust in the name of the Lord. He will keep us on the narrow path that takes us ever closer and closer to Almighty God until at the end, we see Him face to face.

Your CLI Discipler will pray for you based on how Jesus interceded for his past, present and future disciples (John 17:6-26). Please use your answers (Questions 28 & 29) or the verses themselves as a basis for praying for your CLI Discipler. Thank you. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you!

**30.** Pray for your CLI Discipler using (John 17:6-26) as a guide. Write and tell your CLI Discipler that you are praying for him or her based on Jesus' prayers for His disciples. Include anything that the Holy Spirit impresses upon you as you pray.

**You may check your answers for questions 28-29 and use the following as a prayer guide for your CLI Discipler:**

**How Christ prayed for His disciples**

1. Acknowledges His disciples to God and that He is lifting them up in prayer (v. 9).
2. Protection to remain in God's will, love and purposes and against the devil's schemes to make them fall into sin (vs. 11c, 15).
3. They may have the full measure of joy within them (v. 13)
4. Set them apart to know God's Word and to obey it (v. 17).
5. Jesus consecrates Himself as High Priest and consecrates the disciples for mission (v. 17).  
(We have been saved in order to be set apart and commissioned for God's service.)

**How Christ prayed for all disciples (even future ones)**

1. Unity with God so the world may know of God's redemptive plan in Christ (vs. 21-23a).
2. Complete unity with all disciples so that through Christ the world may know God's love (v. 23b). Think John 3:16 also and the need to tell the story of Christ's death and resurrection.
3. Asks that His disciples may see His glory and be with Him in eternity (v. 24).
4. Jesus will continue to make the Father known to all His disciples in order that God's love for Jesus will be in His disciples and that Jesus Himself will be in them (v. 26).

**31.** Which prayer of Jesus is the most well known? List chapter and verses.

Jesus prayed in different situations and in all kinds of ways. We will do the same. There are various reasons and circumstances in our lives and in the lives of others for which we will pray. God wants to be included in every facet of our being.

Jesus models and encourages us to pray in praise (worship), thanksgiving (gratitude), confession (plainly telling our wrongs), listening (meditation, being attuned<sup>4</sup> to His voice), petition (personal requests) and intercession (requests for others). These are all important ways that we communicate with God and they should all be part of our ongoing communication with Him.

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<sup>4</sup> Being attuned to God's voice means that you are in a harmonious or responsive relationship.

Praise, thanksgiving, confession, listening, petition and intercession all need to be an active part of our lives in order for us to have the full benefit of Jesus' most powerful promise to His disciples. Jesus promises to answer any request (petition, intercession) that His disciples make. He also promises that through Him, God the Father will also answer any request. This promise was not only for the disciples in the audience over 2,000 years ago, but it is also for each succeeding generation of disciples.

In the book of John, Jesus repeats five times that disciples should ask and they will receive. Do you ever wonder what the angels in heaven must think about our lack of prayer, especially in light of this phenomenal promise? Well, today we are going to make sure that we understand Jesus' promise and use it for the full benefit that He made it.

Jesus not only gave the promise to answer requests, He also gave instructions for asking in the right way and for the right reason. Most of God's promises carry conditions (qualifications). Read the appropriate verses and answer the question(s) that follow.

*And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.<sup>14</sup> You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.* John 14:13-14

**32.** Read John 14:13-14. What is the reason Jesus gives for doing whatever a disciple asks?

**33.** How does God the Son bring glory to God the Father? (Read the following verses for your answer: John 11:4, 14:10-11, 15:8, 17:4-5; Romans 16:25-27; 1 Peter 4:11; Philippians 4:13; Revelation 5:11-13.)

**Read John 15:7-8 and answer questions 34-36:**

*If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.<sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.* John 15:7-8

**34.** What condition does Jesus place on disciples for giving us whatever we wish (v. 7)?

**35.** How are *you* remaining in Jesus and how are His words remaining in you?

**36.** Bearing much fruit brings God the Father glory and shows that we are disciples of Christ (v. 8). With this knowledge, what will *you* ask God for in Jesus' name?

**Read John 15:16 and answer questions 37-38:**

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-- fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.<sup>17</sup> This is my command: Love each other.* John 15:16-17 (See also: John 14:13-14, 16:23-24, 26-27)

**37.** Who chose you and appointed you to go and bear lasting fruit (v. 16)?

**38.** When we are bearing lasting fruit in Jesus, what will the Father do when we pray?

Prayer is crucial for followers of Christ. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, we find the men and women of God reaching out in praise, thanksgiving, confession, listening, petition (requests) and intercession (praying for others). Study the prayers in the Bible and you will learn more about God and discover ways to honor and please Him.

Studying the prayers in the Bible will also help you become a stronger disciple and confident of your position in God's Kingdom. Here are a few famous prayers to get you started: **Ezra** - Ezra 9:6-15, **Solomon** - 2 Chronicles 6:4-11, 14-42, **Jehoshaphat** - 2 Chronicles 20:5-12, and **Daniel** - Daniel 2:20-23. Study also how God worked in the New Testament in response to His disciples' prayers: Acts 9:11-20, 11:5-30, 12:12-17, 16:25-40, 22:17-30.

**39.** Read some or all of the prayers that were listed above. Think about the purposes or reasons for the prayers and why they have been recorded for us. Answer the following questions.

**a.** What are the two most meaningful things that you learned? List the book(s) and verse(s) where you received these meaningful insights.

**b.** Give two ways that you will incorporate these meaningful insights into your prayer life:

God works in response to our calling upon Him (i.e. our prayers). We call on God to save us from sin, enemies, sickness, affliction, trouble and heartache. God really wants us to call on Him and He desires to answer our prayers. Jesus told us five times to ask in His name. Nevertheless, sometimes our prayers are not answered, and we will look at those reasons in the next lesson.

**Next: Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace; Christian Maturity Worksheet**

### **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Lesson 1**

#### CLI Disciple of Christ Study: Position in the Kingdom

**Return your answers to your Discipler for discussion and review.** Include your own personal letter and comments with your answers. The Disciple of Christ ministry is designed to forge a close yet professional friendship between you and your Discipler. Letters or short notes help bridge the distance and connect hearts in Christ.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom (Day One) *Share in Jesus' Suffering***

**1.** Share a time when you felt unnoticed and unappreciated: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Would you like to have a position of authority and respect? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

3. At this point in your Christian life, how well do you think you are living out Kingdom values and serving others? Rate yourself, with 1 being just beginning and 10 as living perfectly by Kingdom values and attitudes. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circle One) Explain your rating:

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4. Are you willing to suffer, experience pain and be rejected by other people because of Jesus? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

5. If you have suffered because of your relationship with Jesus, please share what happened:

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6. Even though Tara is not a professed Christian, how is she an example of sharing in Jesus' suffering?\_\_\_\_\_

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**Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Two) *Putting God's Plans First*

7. Write Luke 9:23 from memory without referring to notes:\_\_\_\_\_

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8. List three Bible references that counsel us to put God and His plans first: (1\_\_\_\_\_

(2.\_\_\_\_\_(3.\_\_\_\_\_

9. Write John 19:11a from memory without referring to notes:\_\_\_\_\_

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10. If you were the pastor when Joanne's mother had asked for help, how would you have handled the situation as a disciple of Christ?\_\_\_\_\_

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11. Prayerfully consider and answer: Do you have a dominating or domineering spirit?  
Yes No Sometimes (Circle One)

12. What will you do to develop a more humble, modest and gentle spirit?

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**Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Three) *Service to Others*

13. How difficult is it for you to put your own needs aside and serve others?\_\_\_\_\_

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14. Do you think it was difficult for Jesus to put aside His earthly needs and serve others?  
Yes No Maybe (Circle One) Please explain your answer:\_\_\_\_\_

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15. Put your own interests aside and serve someone in love today. Write the circumstances of your service and what you learned:\_\_\_\_\_

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16. How will *you* guard against a legalistic attitude in *your* service to others?

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17. Write Matthew 20:25-28 from memory without referring to notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Four) *Making Disciples*

18. Who was Jesus talking to? (see vs. 16-17 in Bible)? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Are you and I included in this command? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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20. What would have happened if the first disciples had not obeyed and acted?

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21. What will happen if you and I do not obey and act? \_\_\_\_\_

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22. What does Jesus say (vs. 18, 20) that gives *you* confidence to carry out His directive (order)?

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23. Write Matthew 28:18-20 from memory without referring to notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Lesson 1: Position in the Kingdom** (Day Five) *Doctrine of Prayer*

24. Do you regularly call on the name of the Lord? Why or Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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25. Are there any areas of your life that you are not trusting God or need more faith? What will you do about it? \_\_\_\_\_

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26. Please list your immediate family members, noting relationship and how your CLI Discipeler may pray for them. Write and ask your CLI Discipeler for a similar list so you may pray.

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27. How did Christ pray for Himself (John 17:1-5)? List individual verses by your answers.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

**28.** How did Christ pray for His disciples (John 17:9-17)? List individual verses by answers.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**29.** How did Christ pray for all disciples, including future ones (John 17:21-26)? List verses.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**30.** Pray for your CLI Discippler using (John 17:6-26) as a guide. Write and tell your CLI Discippler that you are praying for him or her based on Jesus' prayers for His disciples. Include anything that the Holy Spirit impresses upon you as you pray.

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**31.** Which prayer of Jesus is the most well known ? \_\_\_\_\_

**32.** Read John 14:13-14. What is the reason Jesus gives for doing whatever a disciple asks?

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**33.** How does God the Son bring glory to God the Father? (Read the following verses for your answer: John 11:4, 14:10-11, 15:8, 17:4-5; Romans 16:25-27; 1 Peter 4:11; Philippians 4:13;

Revelation 5:11-13.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**34.** What condition does Jesus place on disciples for giving us whatever we wish (v. 7)?

\_\_\_\_\_

**35.** How are *you* remaining in Jesus and how are His words remaining in you?

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\_\_\_\_\_

**36.** Bearing much fruit brings God the Father glory and shows that we are disciples of Christ

(v. 8). With this knowledge, what will *you* ask God for in Jesus' name? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**37.** Who chose you and appointed you to go and bear lasting fruit (v. 16)? \_\_\_\_\_

**38.** When we are bearing lasting fruit in Jesus, what will the Father do when we pray?

\_\_\_\_\_

**39.** Read some or all of the prayers that were listed. Think about the purposes or reasons for the prayers and why they have been recorded for us. Answer the following questions.

**a.** What are the two most meaningful things that you learned? List the book(s) and verse(s)

where you received these meaningful insights. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**b.** Give two ways that you will incorporate these meaningful insights into your prayer life:

\_\_\_\_\_

