

Disciple of Christ Study: Lesson 2 Prayer and Grace

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 2: Prayer and Grace (Day One) *Unanswered and Answered Prayer*

In our first lesson, we studied Jesus' teaching on achieving position in God's kingdom. Jesus was not saying it was wrong to seek high rank, but that such a prominent position in God's economy was the opposite of the world. The Teacher wanted His disciples to understand what was involved in seeking an elevated level for oneself. To be great in God's kingdom means sharing in Christ's suffering, not dominating others and offering compassionate service to others.

We also reviewed prayer and the importance of personally communicating with God. Some of you may have been surprised at my closing statement: God may not answer your prayers. Let us look at the reasons and Scripture to confirm this statement.

Five Reasons God May Not Answer Our Prayers:

1. Engaging or keeping sin in our mind and thoughts.

If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; Psalm 66:18
(Cherish means to retain a memory or wish in the mind as a source of pleasure or ambition.)

2. Rebellion and disobedience to the Lord and His commands.

You came back and wept before the LORD, but he paid no attention to your weeping and turned a deaf ear to you. Deuteronomy 1:45 (Read Deuteronomy 1:29-46 for full explanation.)

3. Forgetting the Lord's provision and seeking help, protection or resources elsewhere.

When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the LORD will not answer you in that day. 1 Samuel 8:18

4. Not trying to understand God's purpose nor desiring it.

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Ephesians 5:17

5. Praying or asking God for things with selfish or wrong motives.

When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. James 4:3

1. From these five reasons that God may not answer our prayers, which one is the most challenging for you and why?

****See end of lesson for repeat of questions and blank spaces for you to write your answers.**

2. What will you do this week to overcome sin and be assured of God answering your prayers?

3. Write of your success and how Jesus helped you with your plan in question 2:

There is much to having intelligent and sincere talks with God. God truly loves us but He wants us to approach Him in the right way, for the right reasons and for the right things. Think of a child rudely asking his rich dad to take him to Disney World...*immediately*.

4. What do you see wrong with the child's rude request for a trip to Disney World?

We can learn from this example and remember it is best to approach God with love and respect. God is the sovereign ruler over the universe. We do not make demands on God, nor do we treat Him in a flippant or frivolous way. We submit to Him in all things. We are immensely blessed to be in a relationship with the triune God, but relationship does not mean that we treat God like we might treat our family or friends. It is a different kind of relationship and although we use our human relationships as analogies, all comparisons fall short of the reality and exquisite Being of YHWH.

It is mind-boggling (incredible) when we read in the Bible that an all-powerful, all-wise and all-knowing God wants to be in a relationship with us. He wants us to be part of His heavenly kingdom and family. Jesus makes the point clear when he refers to God as the disciples' heavenly Father (Matthew 5:48, 6:14,26,32). As a disciple of Christ, God is your heavenly Father, also.

Our heavenly Father wants to know that we desire His presence because of who He is, not for what He can do for us. He also asks that we have a genuine desire to honor Him with our requests. Also, consider God's timing. It may be that He has already granted your petition, but it will not come to pass until sometime in the future.

Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. Isaiah 65:24

Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. Isaiah 58:9a

O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you. Isaiah 30:19

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Matthew 6:8

Wow! These are really encouraging words from our Father and Lord in heaven. At CLI we have seen God work in these ways many times matching up just the right book, Bible or letter with just the right inmate at just the right time.

Definitions: Context is defined as the text surrounding words, phrases or passages that come before and after a particular word, phrase or passage. It helps explain its full meaning.

Contextual is the “meaning of a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, passage, etc., as it stands in relationship to the larger literary context, from a sentence to the entire book of the Bible.”¹ To take something “out of context” means to give it a meaning that ignores the overall writing, work or situation.

Let us pause a second. We need to think about the context of the above Bible verses. Is God saying that He answers everyone’s call so quickly? How do we know if God has answered our prayers before we have even made the request?

In order to know the answers to those questions, we must look for its contextual meaning. I learned this lesson a long time ago when I published a magazine. The local media would ask to interview me and then would only take certain sentences or phrases to use in their stories without airing the whole thought. This can happen in print media or in general conversations with friends. At any rate, the “sound bites” gave a different meaning than I had intended.

We can misuse the Bible in the same way. Even though it is God’s Word, it is still a large work of literature (writing). The protestant Bible is made up of 66 books, covering a period of about 3,500 years. It is estimated that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, called the Pentateuch (pěn tə-tu : k’), sometime during his 40 years in the desert (1446-1406 BC²). Because of the length, time period and various authors, it can and is open to many abuses.

5. Who is the Abuser of Scripture and an expert at taking it out of context for his own purposes (Genesis 3:4-5; Matthew 4:6, 16:23; Mark 4:15)?

There are about 31,000 verses in the Bible with about 23,000 in the Old Testament and about 8,000 in the New Testament. Our enemy, the devil, knows this Book much better than we do and is only too happy to help us misunderstand just one of those 31,000 verses. His goal in doing this is to keep people in bondage, cause division, sin and much heartache. Pray against his schemes in your life and ours!³

Satan has not only been around the whole 3,500 years, he has a powerful intellect. On our own we are no match for him either in physical strength or brain power. We need to rely on someone stronger and smarter than he. We must rely on God!

¹ Hernando, James D., Dictionary of Hermeneutics.

² BC is the symbol meaning “before the birth of Christ.” AD is the symbol that means “in the year of our Lord” and is taken from the Latin term Anno Domini. Some authors and publishers prefer to use BCE meaning “before common era” and CE for “common era.”

³ Deaf Missions: <http://www.deafmissions.com/tally/bkchptrvrs.html>

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

6. Memorize 1 John 4:4 in order to remember where your strength and wisdom come from:

We must rely on the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us in reading and interpreting Scripture. He will help us understand the context of a verse and how we can apply it to our lives. He will also quicken (make alive, stir) verses that have special meaning for us for a particular time in our lives. God speaks through His word by the power of His Holy Spirit.

On page 2 you read four verses from two different books of the Bible and four different chapters. All of the verses have something to do with God answering prayers. We have been talking about context or taking words “out of context.” You will now have an opportunity to look more closely at the context of these verses and get a better understanding of what these verses mean to us.

7. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in reading Isaiah, chapter 30. Write a short summary of what is happening in this chapter. Explain the meaning of verse 19:

Other than studying the Bible, one of the best ways to learn about prayer is to read nonfiction (factual) books on the subject and biographies (account of person's life) of men and women who were devoted prayer warriors. *Pray and ask God to bring you a book on prayer that will help you know, love and communicate with Him better.*

John ‘praying’ Hyde was an amazing prayer warrior. He served the Lord in the early 1900s and is remembered for his famous and heartfelt cry: “Give me souls, oh God, or I die!” Most of the information that follows is from a book entitled *Praying Hyde* by Captain E. G. Carre’, Bridge Publishing, Inc., NJ, 1982.

John grew up in America in the state of Illinois where his parents were devoted followers of Christ. John headed to seminary in 1892, and it was during this time that prayer became His calling and a strong feature of his life and work. He prayed for all the students individually by name and took time to meet with many. It was said of John that he was a torch of prayer; his soul a flame that carried light and warmth.

He went to India as a missionary and continued his life of prayer. The author writes, “His prayer life was one of absolute obedience to God. I remember once the lunch bell sounded when we were in the prayer room. I hear him whisper: ‘Father, is it Your will that I go?’ There was a pause, and when the answer came, he said: ‘Thank You, Father,’ and rose with a smile and went to lunch.”

“At one time John Hyde was told to do something and he went and obeyed, but returned to the prayer room weeping, confessing that he had obeyed God unwillingly. ‘Pray for me, brethren, that I may do this joyfully.’ We soon learned afterward that he had been led to obey triumphantly. Then he received the promise that he would be the (spiritual) father of many children, an Abraham indeed.”

On pages 24-25, the author E.G. Carre' writes: "If we are willing to put ourselves into God's hands, then God is willing to use us. But there are two conditions: obedience and purity. Obedience in everything, even in the *least*, surrendering up our wills and taking the will of God. And the next step is purity. God wants pure vessels for His service, clean channels through which to pour forth His grace. He wants purity in the very center of the soul, and unless God can have a pure vessel, purified by the fire of the Holy Spirit, He cannot use that vessel. He is asking you now if you will let Him cleanse away part of your very life. God must have a vessel He can use."

8. How is God calling you to a new level of commitment in obedience and purity?

9. How will you cooperate with God in attaining (reaching) your new level of commitment in obedience and purity?

John had difficulties in his new missionary post in India, where he faced persecution from the natives. He and other missionaries then formed the Punjab Prayer Union where they set aside half an hour a day to pray for spiritual revival. In 1908 he told the conference that he had "laid hold of God in a very definite covenant." It was for one soul or conversion a day.

"Three hundred sixty five people converted, baptized, and publicly confessed Jesus as their Savior. Impossible -- yet it happened. Before the next convention, John Hyde had prayed more than 400 people into God's kingdom, and when the prayer union gathered again, he doubled his goal to two souls a day. Eight hundred conversions were recorded that year, and still Hyde showed an unquenchable passion for lost souls.

At the 1910 convention, those around Hyde marveled at his faith, as they witnessed his near violent supplications, "Give me souls, oh God, or I die!" Before the meeting ended, John Hyde revealed that he was again doubling his goal for the coming year. Four souls a day, and nothing less. During the next twelve months John Hyde's ministry took him throughout India. By now he was known as "Praying Hyde," and his intercession was sought at revivals in Calcutta, Bombay, and other large cities. If on any day four people were not converted, Hyde said at night there would be such a weight on his heart he could not eat or sleep until he had prayed through to victory. The number of new converts continually grew.

It was in Calcutta that friends persuaded Hyde to see a doctor about his rapidly deteriorating health. The years of such strenuous effort had obviously taken a toll. Yet no one expected the medical examiner's incredible diagnosis. John Hyde's heart had shifted out of its natural position on the left side of his chest to a place over on the right. It was unlike anything the doctor had seen before, and he warned Hyde that unless he got complete rest he would be dead in six months.

In fact, Praying Hyde lived for nearly two more years, long enough to see a wave of revival sweep through the Punjab and the rest of India -- and long enough to have his own personal vision enlarged. Before he died, he shared what God had shown him:

*On the day of prayer, God gave me a new experience. I seemed to be away above our conflict here in the Punjab and I saw God's great battle in all India, and then away out beyond in China, Japan, and Africa. I saw how we had been thinking in narrow circles of our own countries and in our own denominations, and how God was now rapidly joining force to force and line to line, and all was beginning to be one great struggle. That, to me, means the great triumph of Christ. We must exercise the greatest care to be utterly obedient to Him who sees all the battlefield all the time. It is only He who can put each man (and woman) in the place where his life can count for the most."*⁴

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Two) *Prayer-Walking*

John 'praying' Hyde's life bears witness to the power of prayer. No matter what kind of kingdom work you are engaged in, it must start and end with God. Through prayer, God transforms (changes) us, people, circumstances and the world around us.

We can pray in various ways and situations. For example, there are several ways to *prayer walk* or pray while you are walking. You might take a quiet walk by yourself and commune alone with God. Or you might *pray-walk* with others as a form of spiritual warfare targeting and evicting evil and demons from the area.⁵ The amount of time you spend in prayer walking should be determined by God, your prayer team and you.

Yet another form of *prayer-walking* is to intercede for people and situations on your path. Even if you do not know a person along your route, you can seek the Holy Spirit's leading in bringing their needs before the Lord. In the same way, you may pass an area that is walled or hidden from your sight. Ask the Spirit how to pray for those who live, work or frequent that enclosure or dwelling.

Your assignment this week is to take three different prayer walks. The first walk is for you alone. However, the other two *prayer walks* include other saints. Most *prayer walks*, unless you are communing with God, include one or two other prayer partners. If large numbers of people are *prayer walking*, they would usually be divided into threes. In this way, it is easier to hear the other people praying and have adequate time for each to pray.

If you have restrictions on gathering with one or more people, please do not break any rules. You may do your *prayer walking* alone in the yard or when going to a particular destination, such as meals, etc. Ask God how He would like you to accomplish your assignments within the guidelines of your particular situation and institution.

10. Contemplative (thoughtful) Walk. Prepare your heart to talk, listen, and worship God and then go for your walk. Write of your experience:

11. Spiritual Warfare Walk. Ask God who He wants to join you. Prepare your heart, share the purpose of your prayer walk with your prayer team and walk. Write of your experience:

⁴(CBN.com:http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/PrayerAndCounseling/Intercession/praying_john_hyde.aspx)

⁵ Dictionary of Christianese, <http://www.dictionaryofchristianese.com/prayer-walk-prayer-walking/>

12. Intercession (pray for others) Walk. Ask God who He wants to join you. Prepare your heart, share the purpose of your prayer walk with your prayer team and walk. Write of your experience:

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Three) *Purpose of Prayer*

Read Jeremiah 4:22 and answer questions 13-15:

"My people are fools; they do not know me. They are senseless children; they have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil; they know not how to do good." Jeremiah 4:22

13. Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, God has harsh words for His people. "My people are fools because:

14. God says His people are senseless children because:

15. God says His people are skilled at doing evil because:

Read Exodus 33:13-14 and answer questions 16-20:

If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people."¹⁴ The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Exodus 33:13-14

16. Why did Moses want God to teach him his ways (v. 13)?

17. How did the LORD answer Moses' prayer (v. 14)?

18. How can we know if the LORD is pleased with us? (Reference John 15:4, 17:22-23)

19. Can you please or love someone that you do not know? Why or why not?

20. Based on today's study, what do you think is an important purpose of prayer?

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. Psalm 32:8-9

21. Read and meditate on Psalm 32:8-9. What is God saying to you?

God created human beings for His glory (Isaiah 43:7). It would be difficult, if not impossible, to glorify God without knowing Him. We would not understand the good He desires of us and would end up doing evil. From the Scripture we studied today, an important and even prime purpose of prayer, is to know God, His character and His ways. Prayer enables us to fulfill the reason for which we were created.

Knowing God is a life-time pursuit. We will never completely know God because He is beyond our total comprehension (understanding, knowledge). He is incomprehensible. In other words, although we can know God personally through Jesus Christ, we can not fully understand His immense intellect and power.

However, we can increasingly know His character (attributes), ways and plans for our lives. Moses asked God to teach him in order to know and please Him. This humble prophet was called to lead a great nation (God's people) and instead of taking power and running with it, he stopped for prayer. He wanted to make sure he knew God, His character and His ways.

In Christ, you are also called to lead. You are to lead others to Christ and lead those in Christ to serve Him fully. You are not only a disciple, but also Abraham's descendant and heir to the promise (Genesis 12:2-3; Galatians 3:8-9,14, 26-29). In order to be fully equipped as a disciple of Christ and an heir to the promise, we must continually be in communication with God.

22. Where do you think your strength lies in praying to God?
23. Where do you think your weakness lies in praying to God?
24. What might be a personal goal in improving your prayer life with God?
25. How can your CLI Discipeler help you in this regard? How might the two of you hold each other accountable?

God works in response to our calling upon Him. Prayer is an important aspect of how God may work in our lives and hence an important part of receiving God's grace. We call on God to save us from sin, enemies, sickness, affliction, trouble and heartache. There is nothing we have done or could do that makes us worthy of God's grace.

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Four) *Gift of Empowerment*

Definition: Favor has three meanings in English: 1. a kind or helpful act that you do for someone 2. approval, support, or popularity 3. preference for one person, group, etc., over another.

Moses (Exodus 33:13) desired continued favor with God. The English word favor is the word Hen (חֵן favor, grace) in Hebrew. Grace is a word that can be used of God's favor to us and of our favor to another. It is used in various ways in the Old and New Testaments.

Finding favor or grace is a Semitism⁶ (Gen 6:8, 18:3; Judges 6:17) and a common Old Testament expression (Gen 33:9-10). It was used in the everyday life of the Hebrews. Depending on the context, finding favor or grace could mean that a person is showing kindness to someone or someone is pleased with the kindness he has been shown.⁷

⁶ This means that it is a Semitic word or idiom (expression). Semitic refers the Semites (includes the Hebrews), their language and culture.

⁷ Bock, Darrell L., "Luke Volume 1:1:1-9:50", Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1994, p. 111.

The word grace is used in various ways in the New Testament. We are to make our speech “gracious” or “attractive” (Col 4:6; Eph 4:29), visits to saints would bring pleasure (2 Corinthians 1:15), the monetary collection for the Jerusalem saints (1 Corinthians 16:3, 2 Corinthians 8:1, 4, 6, 7, 19), give thanks as over a meal (1 Corinthians 10:30), songs of praise (Col 3:16) and thanks to God (Romans 6:17, 7:25).⁸

It is helpful to understand the various meanings of grace in Bible. However, in this lesson, we will be concentrating on God’s grace. We want to study how His grace affects our lives and how this knowledge will make us more effective disciples.

26. Pretend *you* were given a beautifully wrapped gift. You open your gift and inside is God’s grace. Describe God’s grace in your own words:

Definition: A gift or present is something given voluntarily and without any expectation of payment or reward. It is free to the recipient (receiver).

When we receive a gift from God, we must recognize that we have done nothing to deserve it. He is giving it voluntarily and not because we merit (earn) it. We are not worthy to receive such attention from God. Simply, no one warrants (deserves) God’s grace.

Nevertheless, God desires that we take and open His gift. In fact, God is continually giving us gifts, but we can be too faithless, lazy or ungrateful to open them. We have beautifully wrapped gifts all around us. They are stacked in our closet and under our beds. We continually miss the grace that God wants us to have on a daily, if not minute by minute, basis. If only we would reach out to God and accept the abundant supply of grace that He is offering us. Oh, the sadness of it all!

When we take the time to open our gift and look inside, we see God’s divine power at work in our lives. Yes, it is a spiritual gift, in that we do not see a material item. However, the effects of accepting the gift are enormous.

Am I fearful? I see God’s power at work to make me fearless. Am I weak? I see God’s power at work to make me strong. Do I have broken relationships? I see God’s power at work to restore each one. Whatever is lacking in our Christian lives, God’s divine power is available through a free gift to make up the deficit. In fact, it was God’s grace that saved us in the first place, and started us on the path of discipleship.

Please do not take the analogy (comparison) of God’s grace with a wrapped gift too far. We do not always have to open the gift. In other words, God *may* work in our lives even when we are not cooperating or even seeking Him. We will never understand all of God’s ways, but we can comprehend much through the Bible. We need to take that knowledge He *has* revealed to us and put it into practice.

Definition of Grace: Grace is God’s divine power in action to undeserving people.

⁸ Butler, Trent C., Holman bible Dictionary, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1991, p.574.

God's Grace (Two examples: A & B)

A. Hannah's Prayer: God works in response to our calling upon Him. Hannah's name also means grace or favor in Hebrew, Channah (חַנָּה):

In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the LORD.¹¹ And she made a vow, saying, "O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head." 1 Samuel 1:10-11

Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the LORD and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her.²⁰ So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, "Because I asked the LORD for him." 1 Samuel 1:19-20

27. Did Hannah deserve to have a baby? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

Hannah was childless in a society where a woman's value depended upon childbirth in marriage. She had been ridiculed for not having children and in her devastation called on the Lord. Now, just because she was sad and forlorn does not mean that she deserved to have a child. No one on earth earns favor or merit with God. No one is worthy!

28. Since Hannah was barren, what was the only way that she was going to conceive (have a baby)?

God delights to act in accordance to our faith. Hannah did not trust herself, her husband, relatives, idols or anyone else. She knew that the only way she was going to have a child was if God provided.

God's grace does not depend on our bargaining power, either. But if we do make a bargain like Hannah did, we need to keep our word (promise) to the Lord. Hannah obediently did what she had promised and gave her son Samuel to Eli the priest for him to raise and train in the ways of the Lord.

B. Mary's Favor without Prayer: God also works on His own initiative without our prayers.

to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.³¹ You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." Luke 1:27-33

29. Did Mary ask God if she could be the mother of His Son? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

There is no record in the Bible of Mary praying to be the mother of God's Son. No one knew or even imagined that Jesus would be born of a virgin, fully God and fully man. God took the initiative, through His Holy Spirit, to make Mary the mother of His Son. She was not worthy of such an honor. No one would be deserving of such an honor.

In the same way, none of us is worthy to partake of God's plan of salvation. He took the initiative to send His Son to die on a cross for the punishment of our sins. Through God's divine power, He worked and effected (brought about) salvation for all mankind.

Salvation is a combination of the two examples of grace. God took the initiative, but we must accept and act in faith. In other words, we have done nothing to deserve the gift of salvation but we must tell God we want to be saved. We accept God's divine power to save us from our sins by calling on Him (Romans 10:13).

Every aspect in the Christian life is due to grace. We need to be aware of God and His grace in order to act. We also need to place ourselves under God's rule and will in order not to hamper His grace (divine working in our lives). Remember the reasons that God may not answer your prayers (Day One); this goes for His grace also. Not only do we not deserve His grace, we also cannot presume (assume, take for granted) on it. God's grace is for His glory, not for our satisfaction.

30. How will this lesson on grace strengthen your walk with the Lord?

31. Is there any aspect of *your* Christian life in which you are not relying on God's grace? Explain.

32. Write a definition of God's grace in your own words:

33. Make a concerted (concentrated, strenuous) effort to open God's gifts of grace this week. Write your CLI Disciplex about the results and how you experienced God working in your life.

34. Pray for God to show you how to use this lesson on grace with others. What did God reveal to you and what happened?

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Five) *Responsibility and Effort*

Every aspect in the Christian life and all Christian theology is related to the doctrine of grace. We need to be aware of God and His grace in order to act according to His will. We need to place ourselves under God's rule or will in order not to hamper His grace (divine working in our lives) in our lives.

We must trust, obey and depend on God for what He has done, is doing and will do on our behalf from Creation to End Times. Therefore, choosing and living according to God's revealed Word (Bible) opens our lives to Jesus and His power. Another way of saying this is to live a holy,

disciplined life according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. This, of course, is what discipleship is all about!

Read 2 Timothy 1:8-10 and answer questions 35-36:

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God,⁹ who has saved us and called us to a holy life-- not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 2 Timothy 1:8-10

35. Who saved you and called you to a holy life (v. 8-9)?

36. How and when was God's grace given to you (v. 9)?

37. How has God's grace been revealed to you (v. 10)?

Read Titus 2:11-12 and answer questions 38-39:

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. Titus 2:11-12

Definition: Self-control is the ability to control oneself, in particular one's emotions and desires or the expression of them in one's behavior, especially in difficult situations.

38. What does grace teach us (v. 12)?

39. God's grace teaches self-control (v. 12). What is your responsibility in leading a godly life?

Read the following verses and answer question 40-42:

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.⁸ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:7-8

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. 2 Peter 3:14

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58

40. We must train ourselves and put effort into leading godly lives. True False (Circle One)

41. As long as we are saved, God does not care how we live or work. True False (Circle One)

42. How do you live by God's grace and yet put effort into training yourself to be godly?

Read the following verses and answer question 43-45:

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. James 2:17

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead. James 2:26

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:12-14

43. Grace means that we do not have to work and exert ourselves. True False (Circle One)

44. Grace spurs (drives) you to an active, vibrant and fruitful life. True False (Circle One)

45. Are you forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead? Yes No Sometimes (Circle One) Explain your answer:

Sometimes disciples are lonely. Sometimes born again, Spirit-filled Christians just get tired and weary from doing good. Or sometimes they are even physically, emotionally or mentally sick. When any of these things happen, either you or those you are discipling may have real and tender feelings of loss, abandonment or rejection. Either of you may feel unloved by family, friends and even God. It might be difficult to press on and forward. You might feel stuck.

46. Please share any physical, emotional or mental problems that you are dealing with right now?

47. Share any physical, emotional or mental problems that you dealt with in the past and explain how you have been freed to press onward with Jesus:

Being a disciple of Christ does not mean that you will not have issues in life to deal with. If you are in ideal physical health, are always positive in all circumstances and your mind is perfectly functioning, you have a great deal to be thankful for. But we live in a fallen world and most everyone else will have a combination of physical, emotional or mental issues that they must contend with at some time or another in their journey with Christ.

These are the times to start looking for those gift wrapped packages of grace. These are the times to seek out God's grace to heal. His miraculous power can heal anyone, anywhere and at anytime. You may have actually had an experience of God healing you of some ailment or disability. Perhaps when you first trusted Jesus as Lord and repented of your sins, God powerfully worked in your life and took away a major addiction or defect.

Nevertheless, even when God does a miracle in one's life, that does not mean the person will never have any problems or perceived needs. It is a long journey to our heavenly destination.

and we will go through many crises and circumstances along the way. We will always need God and His grace to carry us Home.

Although God is all powerful, He may choose not to heal you in exactly the way you desire. God may want you to go through a long recovery process. He may want you to visit a doctor, go through Christian therapy, or to persistently remain in prayer. In addition, God may decide that you are better off without healing of your sickness.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 and answer questions 47-51:

To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

48. Can you think of any reason that we are not given more information about this torment (v.7)?
49. How many times did Paul beg the Lord to take away his affliction (v. 8)?
50. How did the Lord answer Paul (v. 9)?
51. What did Paul learn from the Lord's answer to his prayer to remove his torment (v. 9)?
52. Through Paul's experience, what lesson do *you* learn?

As a Disciple of Christ, more likely than not, you will also have a thorn in your flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment you. These messengers delight in finding weaknesses and using them against us. Paul certainly had a lot to contend with. He was insulted, persecuted and had other hardships and difficulties. However, as he matured in his faith, he understood that God was working in his life to overcome this wicked tormentor. No matter what was thrown at him, he would overcome it in God's grace.

Sometimes, the torment comes through relationships with family, friends and others. You may be going through a divorce, or your fiancée (boyfriend/girlfriend) may have met and married someone else. These are agonizing situations.

Parent/child relationships are particularly painful and may also be fractured due to anger, abuse or neglect. Perhaps a parent, child or sibling died before your relationship could be restored. Or you may just have problems with relationships in general. God has made us relational people to find enjoyment in each other, but living in a fallen world disrupts His perfect design.

If you do have relationships that are chipped, cracked or broken, do not despair. God's grace is sufficient. He is powerfully at work in your life. Definitely keep those relationships and yourself before the Lord.

53. Fill out the Christian Maturity Worksheet (the last two pages of questions and answers).

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Lesson 2
CLI Disciple of Christ Study: Prayer and Grace

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: _____ Number _____ Date: _____

Name of Institution: _____ Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day One) *God may not Answer Prayer*

1. From these five reasons that God may not answer our prayers, which one is the most challenging for you and why? _____

2. What will you do this week to overcome sin and be assured of God answering your prayers?

3. Write of your success and how Jesus helped you with your plan in question 2: _____

4. What do you see wrong with the child's rude request for a trip to Disney World?

5. Who is the Abuser of Scripture and an expert at taking it out of context for his own purposes (Genesis 3:4-5; Matthew 4:6, 16:23; Mark 4:15)? _____

6. Write 1 John 4:4 from memory without referring to notes: _____

7. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in reading Isaiah, chapter 30. Write a short summary of what is happening in this chapter. Explain the meaning of verse 19:

8. How is God calling you to a new level of commitment in obedience and purity?

9. How will you cooperate with God in attaining (reaching) your new level of commitment in obedience and purity? _____

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Two) *Prayer-Walking*

10. Contemplative (thoughtful) Walk. Prepare your heart to talk, listen, and worship God and then go for your walk. Write of your experience: _____

11. Spiritual Warfare Walk. Ask God who He wants to join you. Prepare your heart, share the purpose of your prayer walk with your prayer team and walk. Write of your experience:

12. Intercession (pray for others) Walk. Ask God who He wants to join you. Prepare your heart, share the purpose of your prayer walk with your prayer team and walk. Write of your experience:

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Three) *Purpose of Prayer*

13. Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, God has harsh words for His people. He say My people are fools because:_____

14. God says His people are senseless children because:_____

15. God says His people are skilled at doing evil because:_____

16. Why did Moses want God to teach him his ways (v. 13)?_____

17. How did the LORD answer Moses' prayer (v. 14)?_____

18. How can *we* know if the LORD is pleased with us? (Reference John 15:4, 17:22-23)

19. Can you please or love someone that you do not know? Why or why not?

20. Based on today's study, what do you thin is the primary purpose of prayer?

21. Read and meditate on Psalm 32:8-9. What is God is saying to *you*?

22. Where do you think your strength lies in praying to God?_____

23. Where do you think your weakness lies in praying to God?_____

24. What might be a personal goal in improving your prayer life with God?_____

25. How can your CLI Discipler help you in this regard? How might the two of you hold each other accountable?_____

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Four) *Gift of Empowerment*

26. Pretend *you* were given a beautifully wrapped gift. You open your gift and inside is God's grace. Describe God's grace in your own words:_____

27. Did Hannah deserve to have a baby? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

28. Since Hannah was barren, what was the only way that she was going to conceive (have a baby)?_____

29. Did Mary ask God if she could be the mother of His Son? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

30. How will this lesson on grace strengthen your walk with the Lord?_____

31. Is there any aspect of *your* Christian life in which you are not relying on God's grace?

Explain. _____

32. Write a definition of God's grace in your own words: _____

33. Make a concerted (concentrated, strenuous) effort to open God's gifts of grace this week. Write your CLI Discipler about the results and how you experienced God working in your life.

34. Pray for God to show you how to use this lesson on grace with others. What did God reveal to you and what happened? _____

Lesson 2: Prayer and Grace (Day Five) *Responsibility and Effort*

35. Who saved you and called you to a holy life (v. 8-9)? _____

36. How and when was God's grace given to you (v. 9)? _____

37. How has God's grace been revealed to you (v. 10)? _____

38. What does grace teach us (v. 12)? _____

39. God's grace teaches self-control (v. 12). What is your responsibility in leading a godly life?

40. We must train ourselves and put effort into leading godly lives. True False (Circle One)

41. As long as we are saved, God does not care how we live or work. True False (Circle One)

42. How do you live by God's grace and yet put effort into training yourself to be godly?

43. Grace means that we do not have to work and exert ourselves. True False (Circle One)

44. Grace spurs (drives) you to an active, vibrant and fruitful life. True False (Circle One)

45. Are you forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead? Yes No Sometimes

(Circle One) Explain your answer:_____

46. Please share any physical, emotional or mental problems that you are dealing with right now?

47. Share any physical, emotional or mental problems that you dealt with in the past and explain how you have been freed to press onward with Jesus:_____

48. Can you think of any reason that we are not given more information about this torment

(v.7)?_____

49. How many times did Paul beg the Lord to take away his affliction (v. 8)?

50. How did the Lord answer Paul (v, 9)?_____

51. What did Paul learn from the Lord's answer to his prayer to remove his torment (v. 9)?

52. Through Paul's experience, what lesson do *you* learn? _____

53. Christian Maturity Worksheet: *Disciple of Christ*

Disciples are constantly growing and changing. It makes our walk with the Lord exciting. We must work in concert with the Holy Spirit to attain the perfection in Christ that God calls us to achieve. Therefore, short and long term goals are beneficial.

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

^N2 Corinthians 3:18

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

2 Peter 1:5-7

Currently

1. What are you doing right now to grow and mature in Christ?
2. What do you see as the greatest challenge in your life right now?
3. Please share any personal vision or purpose that God has impressed upon you:

Next

1. What is one goal for your personal life that you would like to meet this year?
2. What is one goal for your ministry or service life that you would like to meet this year?

3. Please share your greatest need for discipleship in the areas that you listed above:

Future

1. What would you like to see your life or ministry be like in 5 or 10 years?

2. Do you have any goals or objectives to accomplish your long-term goals?

3. Make a list of your strengths and weaknesses that God might like you to address in order to be used in the fullest extent of heaven and earth:

Next: Lesson 3: *Identity in Christ*

Rev 4/8/2015

