



**Discipleship**

## **Ideas for the Iowa District West**

### **Introduction**

The following “Discipleship Ideas” from the readings are not intended for any other purpose than to provide ideas of application from each reading that may be included in the taught and preached Word for this particular Sunday to help teach a life of discipleship. L.C.M.S. pastors are gifted at preaching Law and Gospel, but often lack in the matter of personal applications to the Word. This tool is for no other reason than to offer some seeds of thought to do that.

### **SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - SERIES A**

September 20, 2015

**From C.P.H. About the Cover:** Jockeying for position and prestige is, sadly, nothing new. The disciples even try bringing it into their relationship with Jesus. But our Lord will have none of it. He takes a little one in His arms to show them that greatness isn’t about human achievement or pride, but about God’s gracious and kind regard. A little one who is nothing points us to true greatness

#### **First Reading                      Jeremiah 11:18–20**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD made it known to me and I knew; then you showed me their deeds.

<sup>19</sup>But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter.

I did not know it was against me they devised schemes, saying,

“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living,  
that his name be remembered no more.”

<sup>20</sup>But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously, who tests the heart and the mind,  
let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause.

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading Discipleship Notes:** Jeremiah sees himself as one who was sought after by enemies of the prophet while at the same time recognizing himself as a gentle, unknowledgeable lamb. Would that we would all see ourselves as such and not be tempted to the sin of arrogance and pride. This is an obvious application of this reading and because of the humility of our Savior who humbled Himself for us, we can by God’s grace live in humility of heart and spirit.

**Epistle Reading****James 3:13—4:10**

<sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup>This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup>For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup>But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup>And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

<sup>1</sup>What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? <sup>2</sup>You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. <sup>4</sup>You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup>Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? <sup>6</sup>But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." <sup>7</sup>Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup>Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup>Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup>Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: James' primary concern in this reading also has to do with the sin of arrogance and pride. Yet he properly identifies that because of God's grace we can submit ourselves to God and resist such temptation to evil. God does give grace to those who humble themselves before Him and who recognize their sins and iniquities. Once again the application of this text is first of all a call to repentance of our arrogance and pride and also to a life of submission to the will of God in our lives as we live out our lives in humility.

**Gospel Reading:****Mark 9:30–37**

<sup>30</sup>[The disciples] went on from there and passed through Galilee. And [Jesus] did not want anyone to know, <sup>31</sup>for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." <sup>32</sup>But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

<sup>33</sup>And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" <sup>34</sup>But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup>And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." <sup>36</sup>And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, <sup>37</sup>"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me."

Gospel Discipleship Notes: In this Gospel reading we recognize that the desire for greatness and an attitude of arrogance existed (and still does) even among the close followers of the Lord. This is really a sin that goes all the way back to the Fall of Adam and Eve who thought of themselves more highly than they thought of God, doubting His Word. Then of course, they attempted to excuse themselves and take a more elevated position over the ones who tempted them. The application of the text is once again one of living in humbleness of heart and mind. But a secondary and perhaps a more fitting application for this time of year when Sunday School classes and other Christian education opportunities return to the life of the Church after summer vacation, is that of receiving children in Jesus' name. A good look at our concept of Christian education is helpful from this text. Do we have Sunday School and whatever other educational programs in the Church for the right reasons? Often it is solely because we have always offered them rather than the divine purpose which is to make the Love of Christ known to the children. Because we have received the grace of God, we can also humbly look to how we can be a serious part of the extension of God's grace to children.

## Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

### Read                    **Jeremiah 11:18–20**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD made it known to me and I knew; then you showed me their deeds.

<sup>19</sup>But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter.

I did not know it was against me they devised schemes, saying,

"Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name be remembered no more."

<sup>20</sup>But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously, who tests the heart and the mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause.

1. What was Jeremiah making reference to in verse 18?
2. What did Jeremiah mean about being a gentle lamb led to the slaughter?
3. What was the ultimate intention of his enemies according to verse 19?
4. Who does Jeremiah kind of represent in this reading?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

### Read                    **James 3:13—4:10**

<sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup>This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup>For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup>But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup>And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

<sup>1</sup>What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? <sup>2</sup>You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. <sup>4</sup>You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup>Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? <sup>6</sup>But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." <sup>7</sup>Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup>Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup>Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup>Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

6. What is meant by “meekness of wisdom” in verse 13?
7. What is the difference between wisdom that comes from above and earthly wisdom?
8. James points out where certain evil behaviors originate. Where is that?
9. Who is being referred to in verse 5 who jealously yearns over the spirit in us?
10. What does God give us in order to draw near to Him and how is this done?
11. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

**READ:**

**Mark 9:30–37**

<sup>30</sup>[The disciples] went on from there and passed through Galilee. And [Jesus] did not want anyone to know, <sup>31</sup>for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise.” <sup>32</sup>But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

<sup>33</sup>And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you discussing on the way?” <sup>34</sup>But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup>And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” <sup>36</sup>And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, <sup>37</sup>“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.”

12. Why did Jesus not want anyone to know where He and the disciples were and why?
13. Why were the disciples afraid to ask Jesus for greater clarity of what he was trying to reveal to them?
14. What did Jesus mean by someone being the first must be the last and a servant to all?
15. What does it mean to receive a child in Jesus’ name?
16. What application of this Gospel reading will you apply to your life as a result of hearing it today?

## Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline (Leader's Guide)

### Read                    **Jeremiah 11:18–20**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD made it known to me and I knew; then you showed me their deeds.

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I did not know it was against me they devised schemes, saying,

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that his name be remembered no more."

<sup>20</sup>But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously, who tests the heart and the mind,  
let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause.

1. What was Jeremiah making reference to in verse 18?

*His personal enemies which are identified in verses 21 and 23 who were men of his hometown of Anathoth.*

2. What did Jeremiah mean about being a gentle lamb led to the slaughter?

*This illustration is also used of the Messiah in Isaiah 53. Here it is used to suggest innocence and lack of knowledge regarding the enemies trying to take Jeremiah down and destroy him. Like a lamb being taken to be slaughtered which has no knowledge of what is about to happen, so also Jeremiah felt the same lack of knowledge of what was to happen to him.*

3. What was the ultimate intention of his enemies according to verse 19?

*It was to rid the world of Jeremiah and even the memory of him. This could have easily been accomplished because Jeremiah had no family or children (see 16:2). Such a destruction could have been accomplished.*

4. Who does Jeremiah kind of represent in this reading?

*His troubled life is a representation and an illustration of the Christ.*

5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

### Read:                    **James 3:13—4:10**

<sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup>This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup>For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup>But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup>And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

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6. What is meant by "meekness of wisdom" in verse 13?

*These are deeds done in humility which come from wisdom.*

7. What is the difference between wisdom that comes from above and earthly wisdom?

*Earthly wisdom is tainted with sin and evil which originates from Satan and leads to sin while wisdom that comes from above (from God) is spiritually guided in truth, integrity, and godliness. The differences of these two are made known in verses 16-18.*

8. James points out where certain evil behaviors originate. Where is that?

*Friendship with the world which is enmity with God and therefore evil ever since the fall.*

9. Who is being referred to in verse 5 who jealously yearns over the spirit in us?

*This is God Himself who is a jealous God for the love of His creatures.*

10. What does God give us in order to draw near to Him and how is this done?

*His grace which is delivered to us in His Word and Sacred acts.*

11. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

**READ: Mark 9:30–37**

<sup>30</sup>[The disciples] went on from there and passed through Galilee. And [Jesus] did not want anyone to know, <sup>31</sup>for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going

to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." <sup>32</sup>But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

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12. Why did Jesus not want anyone to know where He and the disciples were and why?

*He was trying to prepare the disciples for what was to come and it was obvious that interruptions and their own lack of spiritual knowledge of the Word was inhibiting them from processing the inevitable truth about the Savior's death and resurrection or why it was even essential for mankind.*

13. Why were the disciples afraid to ask Jesus for greater clarity of what he was trying to reveal to them?

*Probably due to some embarrassment with each disciples claiming to be the greatest among the rest and yet no one even knowing what Jesus meant by his revelations to them.*

14. What did Jesus mean by someone being the first must be the last and a servant to all?

*Greatness in God's kingdom is not defined by the honor given to him by the world, but by the honor given to him by God. That honor comes solely by God's grace to the humble of heart and mind who sees himself as a sinner seeking mercy from God and serves others so as to draw them to God's mercy as well.*

15. What does it mean to receive a child in Jesus' name?

*This is a way of stating what Jesus said in Matthew 25 but in this case elevating the child to a position of one who needs His grace as much as the hungry, the naked, the imprisoned, etc.*

16. What application of this Gospel reading will you apply to your life as a result of hearing it today?



## Discipleship Bulletin Blub

Arrogance and pride stand as some of the most notable frailties of man. God has chosen the humble of heart and spirit however, to exemplify what He considers the most important in the eternal kingdom. That is because one who is humble of heart and spirit know that they need God's grace and mercy and rely on that blessing not only for their acceptance into God's Kingdom, but also for their help to serve others in the name of Jesus also.

## Discipleship Prayer Thought

Heavenly Father, fill us with Your grace that we might solely lean on Jesus, trusting in His mercy for our life and salvation, and filling us with willing obedience to Your Word as we serve one another in Jesus' name. Fill us with humility of heart and spirit that trusting in Your mercy we might find true peace and blessing which You willingly bestow on all who rely on the blood of our Savior for the gracious gift of eternal life. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**