



**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.

### **TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - SERIES B**

October 18, 2015

**From C.P.H. About the Cover:** How difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! Jesus said it is easier for a camel to pass through the needle’s eye than for a wealthy person to enter the kingdom. Our Lord’s point is that entering the kingdom is impossible for any human being by his or her own power. Yet what is impossible for us is not impossible for God. He brings the impossible to pass by His almighty Word!

### **First Reading; Ecclesiastes 5:10–20**

<sup>10</sup>He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. <sup>11</sup>When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? <sup>12</sup>Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

<sup>13</sup>There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, <sup>14</sup>and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. <sup>15</sup>As he came from his mother’s womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. <sup>16</sup>This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? <sup>17</sup>Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

<sup>18</sup>Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. <sup>19</sup>Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. <sup>20</sup>For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

1<sup>st</sup> Reading Discipleship Notes: The wisdom of this reading is amazingly accurate. He who loves money will not be satisfied with it, but always want more and more of it. What is good is when we find enjoyment in our toil which is a gift from God. Whether our vocation is that of a laborer or of some high paid professional, to find enjoyment in what we do is to know Godly satisfaction which is also a gift from God. The application of this text is to encourage one another to search inwardly for that enjoyment and the blessed gift of God is His grace to experience that joy. But believers must also realize that true joy will never be apart from the joy we know in the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is something we carry with us daily in our spiritual lives. This, too, is a gift from God.

**Epistle Reading                      Hebrews 4:1-13**

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. <sup>2</sup>For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. <sup>3</sup>For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,

“As I swore in my wrath,

‘They shall not enter my rest,’”

although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. <sup>4</sup>For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.”

<sup>5</sup>And again in this passage he said,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

<sup>6</sup>Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, <sup>7</sup>again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice,

do not harden your hearts.”

<sup>8</sup>For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. <sup>9</sup>So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, <sup>10</sup>for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

<sup>11</sup>Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup>And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: The writer of Hebrews encourages the reader to strive to enter God’s Sabbath rest. This can only happen when we are engaged in the Living Word of God which will cut to the core of our being with the Law condemn us, but then also offer to us the gracious gift of forgiveness and eternal life. By God’s grace therefore, we can strive for that eternal rest as we continue to be drawn in by God’s Word and the sacred acts of God to know and experience His great love. One day we will be privileged to enter into God’s eternal rest but until then we have His divine promise of blessing on which to cling.

**Gospel Reading:****Mark 10:23–31**

<sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

<sup>24</sup> And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup>It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." <sup>26</sup> And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" <sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." <sup>28</sup> Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." <sup>29</sup> Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, <sup>30</sup> who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. <sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Gospel Discipleship Notes: The great question is asked here, "Then who can be saved?" The rich have difficulty because of their wealth. Those who fall short of the glory of God stand in jeopardy. Even the disciples left all they had to follow Christ. One would think that have been enough? How many people today could say the same thing? Most people are too busy to give up everything and follow the Lord Jesus Christ, or are they? Actually as Jesus said, "All things are possible with God." God also desires all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Our salvation is securely given to us through what our Savior has accomplished on our behalf. As a result of God's grace at work within us, we don't have to love our wealth or honor our possessions so much that they stand in the way of our life with Christ. We can actually use these gifts God has given us for His glory and find joy in doing so.

## Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

### Read **Ecclesiastes 5:10–20**

<sup>10</sup>He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. <sup>11</sup>When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? <sup>12</sup>Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

<sup>13</sup>There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, <sup>14</sup>and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. <sup>15</sup>As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. <sup>16</sup>This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? <sup>17</sup>Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

<sup>18</sup>Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. <sup>19</sup>Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. <sup>20</sup>For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

1. What is the key concern associated with one's lack of satisfaction with money or income?
2. What did the grievous evil Solomon saw bring about in the end?
3. What did Solomon see as good and fitting?
4. For whom was this a good thing, the rich or the poor?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

### Read **Hebrews 4:1–13**

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. <sup>2</sup>For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. <sup>3</sup>For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,

"As I swore in my wrath,

'They shall not enter my rest,'"

although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. <sup>4</sup>For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."

<sup>5</sup>And again in this passage he said,

"They shall not enter my rest."

<sup>6</sup>Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, <sup>7</sup>again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

"Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts."

<sup>8</sup>For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. <sup>9</sup>So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, <sup>10</sup>for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

<sup>11</sup>Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup>And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

6. What is meant by "his rest"?
7. Is it merely eternal or is it also temporal?
8. Where does one find this rest?
9. How is the seventh day rest of creation associated with this rest?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

**READ: Mark 10:23–31**

<sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

<sup>24</sup>And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup>It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." <sup>26</sup>And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" <sup>27</sup>Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." <sup>28</sup>Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." <sup>29</sup>Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, <sup>30</sup>who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. <sup>31</sup>But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

11. What was the circumstance immediately preceding this dialogue with the disciples?
12. What was behind our Savior's reference to the disciples as "children"?
13. How is it evident that Peter still didn't understand how one enters the kingdom of God?

14. What comfort did the Savior give for those have entered the kingdom and what stark reality did he include?
15. What is meant by the word, “many who are first will be last, and the last first”?
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 Ecclesiastes 5:10–20

<sup>10</sup>He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. <sup>11</sup>When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? <sup>12</sup>Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

<sup>13</sup>There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, <sup>14</sup>and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. <sup>15</sup>As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. <sup>16</sup>This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? <sup>17</sup>Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

<sup>18</sup>Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. <sup>19</sup>Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. <sup>20</sup>For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

1. What is the key concern associated with one's lack of satisfaction with money or income?

*The LOVE of money or income stands in the way of love for God and for His kingdom where true satisfaction is to be found.*

2. What did the grievous evil Solomon saw bring about in the end?

*It brought about loss of everything important in the end.*

3. What did Solomon see as good and fitting?

*Finding enjoyment in what one does in life which is a person's vocation.*

4. For whom was this a good thing, the rich or the poor?

*It is really a good thing for everyone because it sets the priorities straight so that both the rich and the poor can find enjoyment in their toil recognizing it as a gift from God. It is only when we properly place God into the center of our lives, that we can experience the true joy and satisfaction of living on this side of eternity.*

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

**Read: Hebrews 4:1–13**

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. <sup>2</sup>For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. <sup>3</sup>For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,

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<sup>8</sup>For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. <sup>9</sup>So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, <sup>10</sup>for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

<sup>11</sup>Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup>And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

6. What is meant by “his rest”?

*It must be understood as two-fold. Obviously the eternal rest is of God and for us but also the spiritual rest we enjoy through faith and the forgiveness of sins we experience in this life.*

7. Is it merely eternal or is it also temporal?

*It is both. Unfortunately most people only think of this rest in an eternal context.*

8. Where does one find this rest?

*It is found in His Word which cuts us with the reality of our sin but also the healing gifts of God’s forgiveness and eternal life.*

9. How is the seventh day rest of creation associated with this rest?

*The seventh day of God’s rest in creation is a picture of the eternal rest we shall experience and a reflection of what we experience in worship through God’s grace. It is good!*

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



**READ: Mark 10:23–31**

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11. What was the circumstance immediately preceding this dialogue with the disciples?

*A rich man had come to Jesus claiming to have lived a lawful life but was unable to give up his wealth and follow Jesus.*

12. What was behind our Savior's reference to the disciples as "children"?

*Shortly before this encounter Jesus had addressed the disciples admonishing them for not allowing children to come to Him because children were a part of the kingdom of God and unless one became like a child (that is longing to learn and confidently trusting in the teacher) he could not enter the kingdom of God. Jesus now sees them as children, His children, wanting to understand and trusting in His teaching.*

13. How is it evident that Peter still didn't understand how one enters the kingdom of God?

*He seems to have complained that he and the other disciples had left everything to follow Jesus and still that was not enough to enter into the kingdom.*

14. What comfort did the Savior give for those have entered the kingdom and what stark reality did he include?

*They will receive a hundred-fold more in blessings in this life and in the life to come*

15. What is meant by the word, "many who are first will be last, and the last first"?

*In this statement Jesus is referring to the Jews who were called first by God, whom He came to first will not all be first but last. The Gentiles who believe in Him will enter the kingdom before they because they were willing to follow and serve Him. Jesus elsewhere defines the concept of being first: Matt. 20:27-28: "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave-- "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

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

## Discipleship Bulletin Blub

Satisfaction is a hard thing to acquire in life when we are tempted by wealth and power and all those things of this world that are temptations to turn away from God. Yet He desires to offer us peace and rest. He does so through Jesus, His Son, who offers us the rest of forgiveness and eternal life. He also calls us His children who will be first in His Kingdom because we are granted grace to follow Him. This can make it so much easier to find enjoyment in the toil of life so that we can honestly serve Him.

## Discipleship Prayer Thought

Heavenly Father, fill us with the peace that surpasses all understanding. Grant us the rest of Your forgiveness and the promised rest of eternal life. Make us mindful the grace You have given so that we might respond to Your love in such a way as to willing serve and obey You. Take from us the love of money and wealth that we might utilize those gifts properly in Your kingdom and grant us eternal peace for Jesus' sake. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**