



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.

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From C.P.H. About the Cover: Often we hope and wonder if things really do happen or will happen just as we have been told. We wait, maybe a little while, maybe a long time, maybe more than a lifetime. Mary waited for what an angel had told her would happen. Before long, things began to happen, and Mary realized that all that had been spoken was being fulfilled in her and in her time.

First Reading; Micah 5:2–5a

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

⁵ And he shall be their peace.

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: When someone studies the messianic prophecies and how they unfold throughout the Old Testament, by the time they reach Micah and this information about the place of birth for the Messiah, one has to stop and take note of something most unique. It isn't just the place of the child's birth that is unique, however, but the comfort, protection and peace this child will bring. So what application can we glean as a result? By God's rich grace,

we can take on the application of not giving up hope on God's will, His design and His ultimate blessings. Even in our faithlessness, we can humble our hearts and look to Him for hope for truly with God "when there is a will, there is a way." He might resolve our issues ever so inconspicuously, but this is only because He wants all the glory. He wants us to stand back in awe at His mighty name and always have hope for He can devise a plan where man has given up hope whether in the inner cities, the depraved heart, or the bankrupt world. God is doing something in our midst.

Epistle Reading Hebrews 10:5–10

⁵Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
"Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me;
⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.
⁷Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'"

⁸When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.
¹⁰And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: After writing about the function of the priests throughout the ages that could not make the worshippers perfect with respect to pardon and the purifying of their consciences, the writer of Hebrews now points to how God was manifested in the flesh, became the sacrifice, and his death upon the accursed tree the ransom. The result is that our salvation and sanctification are secure. And because God has given us such a gift, we can now live in eternal hope and gladly and willingly serve and obey Him. We can make that hope filled with joy so that the world can see the good things God has done in our lives.

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39–45

³⁹In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah,
⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

Gospel Discipleship Notes: Five persons are present in this text. We find Mary and our unborn Lord, Elizabeth and her unborn son and the Holy Spirit. In addition there was great joy present and perhaps one of the greatest worship experiences recorded for us in the Scripture. Here is where we find the clear application for our lives in the text. Because of our salvation, we too can find great joy and be filled with hope that can be expressed in great worship as was the case for Elizabeth.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read Micah 5:2–5a

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

⁵ And he shall be their peace.

1. What is known about Bethlehem other than it was the birthplace of the Savior?
2. What is meant by verse 3?
3. How does “he stand and shepherd his flock”?
4. How is he their peace?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read Hebrews 10:5–10

⁵ Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me;

⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

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⁸ When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.

¹⁰ And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

6. Prior to this portion of Hebrews, the writer talked about the failure of the priests to make the people perfect in pardon and forgiveness. How does this reading point to Christ as the perfect priest who could do this effectively?
7. What is meant by abolishing the first to establish the second?
8. What does it mean that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ?

9. How is the sanctification once for all?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

READ: Luke 1:39–45

³⁹In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

11. Why would Mary have made this trip to Elizabeth with "haste"?
12. What does the baby leaping in Elizabeth's womb suggest about the spiritual nature of an unborn child?
13. Explain how Elizabeth made a confession of her faith in verse 43.
14. What was meant by the words of Elizabeth in verse 45?
15. 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 Micah 5:2–5a

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

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And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

⁵ And he shall be their peace.

1. What is known about Bethlehem other than it was the birthplace of the Savior?
 - *This is where Rachel, wife of Jacob died and was buried*
 - *This is where Ruth the Moabite married Boaz becoming an ancestor of the Christ*
 - *This was the hometown of David*
 - *This was the town recognized by Herod's men in which they said the King of Israel would be born*

2. What is meant by verse 3?

From the time of Micah until the time of the Savior's birth, there was no peace in Bethlehem. It was as though they were given over by God to their own destruction. The return of the brothers would take place as a result of the Savior and His Gospel teaching.

3. How does "he stand and shepherd his flock"?

Jesus did take a stand as He defended the truth of the Scriptures and his shepherding took place as he gave spiritual guidance from the Word and led his people to the green pastures of God's Word.

4. How is he their peace?

Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus became the sole means of forgiveness and salvation for sinful man. This alone grants us peace that surpasses all understanding.

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

Read: Hebrews 10:5–10

⁵Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me;

⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

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¹⁰And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

6. Prior to this portion of Hebrews, the writer talked about the failure of the priests to make the people perfect in pardon and forgiveness. How does this reading point to Christ as the perfect priest who could do this effectively?

The body prepared for God (vrs 5) was the body of the Christ which would be the ultimate and perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. This is the one who came to do the will of God for us (vrs 7).

7. What is meant by abolishing the first to establish the second?

The Old Testament regulations of sacrifice and burnt offerings were all pointing to the one complete and final sacrifice which was that of Christ Jesus. In Christ, the new covenant was established which means that what God was looking for in His people was not sacrifice via the priests, but the sacrifice of the heart which believes in His as the Messiah.

8. What does it mean that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ?

It means that we have been made holy through the sacrifice of Christ. We live in forgiveness and holiness as those who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

9. How is the sanctification once for all?

Through the death and resurrection of Christ, there is no more need for anything to be done for our forgiveness and sanctification. It was done once and for all.

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

READ: Luke 1:39–45

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⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard

the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

11. Why would Mary have made this trip to Elizabeth with "haste"?

She had learned of Elizabeth's pregnancy when she was told of her own conception by the angel messenger. This was not just news to Mary, but a divine matter. The child of Elizabeth would become the forerunner of her own child. This spiritual issue was worth the haste to see Elizabeth and celebrate the salvation of all people.

12. What does the baby leaping in Elizabeth's womb suggest about the spiritual nature of an unborn child?

Even in the uterus the child has both a body and a soul. John's activity in the womb of Elizabeth was a clear evidence that his spirit was enlivened in the presence of our God.

13. Explain how Elizabeth made a confession of her faith in verse 43.

She recognized that Mary was carrying the messiah promised God's to people through the centuries. This child was not only her Savior, but her Lord and King. For her to state this truth was to make her confession of faith.

14. What was meant by the words of Elizabeth in verse 45?

She was speaking of Mary who believed what was revealed to her through the angel messenger. It would have been a difficult thing to do so, but Mary did trust the words of the messenger and said, "Let it be to me as the Lord has spoken." She truly was blessed not only to believe this message but to accept it as truth.

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

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

Our hope in the Lord is based on the trust that we have in His Word and promise. Once that hope is established by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives are filled with the joy of salvation. This is our sanctification, the fact that we are made holy in the sacrifice of our Savior. The result of this blessing is that we can rejoice in our salvation as Elizabeth and Mary did when their visit took place. In doing so we are making a confession of our faith as did Elizabeth. The world needs to hear this confession.

Discipleship Prayer Thought

Heavenly Father, grant us the gift of Your grace to place our trust and hope in the gift of Your Son for our salvation. Fill us with joy in believing and hope for our future that we might be a constant reflection of Your goodness and love to the world around us. Fill our hearts with a love for the worship and praise of Your Holy name. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**