



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.

TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY - SERIES C

February 7, 2016

From C.P.H. About the Cover: To hear the voice of God the Father announce “This is My Son, My Chosen One” would be an overwhelming and stunning event in anyone’s life. The disciples who were with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration witnessed just that. In Holy Scripture, we, too, witness the Father’s words that Jesus is His Chosen One for our salvation. And in those words, we find great joy and hope for our lives

First Reading; Deuteronomy 34:1-12

¹Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, ³the Negeb, and the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. ⁴And the LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, ‘I will give it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there.” ⁵So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, ⁶and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day. ⁷Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated. ⁸And the people of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

⁹And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,

¹¹none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, ¹²and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: It seems that this reading is all about Moses. God shows him the land he would not be able to enter because of his lack of trust at one point of his leadership over Israel. He was 120 years old when he died with perfect vision and plenty of energy and vigor. There was never another prophet like him until the coming of the Messiah. What does one possibly see in this kind of complimentary record of a man of God that would lead to any sort of application of the text? It would be easy to simply use Moses as some sort of example for our own lives of discipleship, but no one could compare their bane existence to that of Moses. Perhaps what needs to be gleaned from this reading is the fact that God has given each of us a purpose and vocations in this life. Not all can be leaders of nations, but all can be instruments of witness to the reality that God cares for us all and God desires to see His will accomplished in the lives of His people. We all have purpose and a calling to faithfully make the love of God known to those around us, not by leading them through a sea of water on dry ground, but by the faithful witness to the Gospel that we have received from God.

Epistle Reading

Hebrews 3:1–6

¹Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, ²who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. ³For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. ⁴(For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) ⁵Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, ⁶but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: Moses once again gets accolades for his life of faithfulness, but in this reading, compared to Jesus it pales. Again we wonder about an application from this reading for our own lives, but we find in the final verse where we are reminded that we are the house that has been made by our Savior. We aren't as honored as He who made this house of faith, but we are a part of it and in this house we are called to faith and kept in faith by the powerful Word of our Lord. In receiving this precious gift, we can hold fast in our confidence of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Our confidence can increase and our hope strengthened. With such a gift, we can also boldly reflect the love of Christ to the people around us and we can witness the life-giving Gospel to them.

Gospel Reading:**Luke 9:28–36**

²⁸Now about eight days after these sayings [Jesus] took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

²⁹And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³²Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. ³⁴As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” ³⁶And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

Gospel Discipleship Notes: One can just about imagine how the three apostles must have felt in the presence of the big three Old Testament Prophets and Jesus. “Who are we to compare with the likes of these guys?” No wonder they were eager to just do something like make some tents for them all. They heard the voice of God and that voice pointed not to the three Old Testament Prophets, but to Jesus, their master. Herein lies an application. It is so easy to stand in the presence of great people and be filled with an eagerness to do something to honor them, but where the honor lies is not in people, but in the person and work of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We honor Him best not by our service, but by our listening to Him and trusting in His Word of truth. In doing so, like the prophets and the apostles, we are empowered to serve Him willingly and effectively as they did.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read Deuteronomy 34:1–12

¹Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, ³the Negeb, and the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. ⁴And the LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, ‘I will give it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there.” ⁵So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, ⁶and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day. ⁷Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated. ⁸And the people of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

⁹And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, ¹¹none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, ¹²and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

1. Why did God not allow Moses to cross over into the promised land?
2. Deuteronomy is credited with the authorship of Moses. How can that be contended on the basis of this reading?
3. What does the information of verse 7 about Moses' health and eyesight suggest about his death?
4. What specific assurance did God offer Jeremiah that he was fully capable of serving as the prophet for which he was consecrated?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read Hebrews 3:1–6

¹Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, ²who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. ³For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. ⁴(For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) ⁵Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, ⁶but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

6. Why was Jesus called “the apostle and high priest of our confession” in verse 1?
7. Why was Moses identified as “faithful in all God’s house” when he had clearly failed a test of faithfulness at Meribah-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin?
8. We are called “his house” in this reading. By what other names is the Church known?
9. How do we continue to “hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope”?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

READ:

Luke 9:28–36

²⁸Now about eight days after these sayings [Jesus] took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

²⁹And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³²Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. ³⁴As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” ³⁶And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

11. What does the fact that the apostles could identify Moses and Elijah say about our ability to know the saints in heaven?
12. Why were they talking about Jesus’ departure which would take place in Jerusalem?
13. We see Peter and the others asleep in this most important occasion of our Savior’s life. When did this happen another time and what does it say about the weakness and frailty of man?
14. On what other occasion was the voice of the heavenly Father heard regarding His Son and how are the two messages similar?
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 Deuteronomy 34:1–12

¹Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, ³the Negeb, and the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. ⁴And the LORD said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, 'I will give it to your offspring.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there." ⁵So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, ⁶and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day. ⁷Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated. ⁸And the people of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

⁹And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, ¹¹none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, ¹²and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

1. Why did God not allow Moses to cross over into the promised land?

See Deuteronomy 32:51, It was because he had broken faith at the waters of Meribah-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin and because he did not treat God as Holy in the midst of the people of Israel.

2. Deuteronomy is credited with the authorship of Moses. How can that be contended on the basis of this reading?

Because it speaks of Moses' death and burial. It is as though the final verses of Deuteronomy were written by someone else (likely Joshua).

3. What does the information of verse 7 about Moses' health and eyesight suggest about his death?

It suggests his death was not due to age, health or any other natural cause, but rather was due to God's own word of promise made in chapter 32. The Lord gives and the Lord takes away according to His plan and purpose and will.

4. What was significant about Moses laying hands on Joshua pertaining to his spirit of wisdom?

This was the way in which Moses committed to Joshua the supreme authority after his departure, and gave him the gifts of the Holy Spirit, to qualify him for it. In like manner the laying on of hands, as a sign of dedicating persons to offices, was accompanied with prayer in the times of the apostles. See Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6.

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

Read: Hebrews 3:1–6

¹Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, ²who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. ³For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. ⁴(For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) ⁵Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, ⁶but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

6. Why was Jesus called “the apostle and high priest of our confession” in verse 1?

And apostle is one who is sent. Jesus is the One who was sent by the heavenly Father to be the Messiah, the Savior of all mankind. He was the great High Priest because He provided and offered the sacrifice for the sins of all mankind and even now serves as the mediator between us and God which is also the work of the High Priest.

7. Why was Moses identified as “faithful in all God’s house” when he had clearly failed a test of faithfulness at Meribah-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin?

It is true, Moses failed personally in his faith, Numbers 20:12; but this was no impeachment of his faithfulness in the special office he fulfilled. As he was to reveal God’s mind, and institute his worship, he was faithful because according to all that God appointed him to do he did, Exodus 40:16. He did not conceal any of the divine laws, nor did he change any of them to make them acceptable, but delivered the whole law as it was spoken to him.

8. We are called “his house” in this reading. By what other names is the Church known?

Bride of Christ, branches of the vine, children of God, etc.

9. How do we continue to “hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope”?

This can only be done through the grace of God at work in us through the Word and Sacrament.

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

READ: Luke 9:28–36

²⁸Now about eight days after these sayings [Jesus] took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

²⁹And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³²Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. ³⁴As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" ³⁶And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

11. What does the fact that the apostles could identify Moses and Elijah say about our ability to know the saints in heaven?

We also will be able to do so and we will be known by all other saints as well.

12. Why were they speaking about Jesus' departure which would take place in Jerusalem?

The fulfillment of all prophecy and the hope of the salvation for the whole world would be accomplished only in the death and resurrection of Christ which these two most important prophets of the Old Testament could only have seen by faith when they were on earth. Now they were being revealed the way it would come about and how God's love for us would be fulfilled in Christ.

13. We see Peter and the others asleep in this most important occasion of our Savior's life. When did this happen another time and what does it say about the weakness and frailty of man?

It happened when Jesus was in the depth of prayer on the Mt of Olives just prior to His arrest and it says much about the spiritual weakness of man.

14. On what other occasion was the voice of the heavenly Father heard regarding His Son and how are the two messages similar?

The other occasion was at the time of His baptism and the similarity of the two messages identifies Jesus as the Beloved One (Son) and therefore the Messiah promised of old.

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

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

Moses, Elijah and the apostles all were blessed to be servants of the Lord God in conveying His truth for salvation to the world around them. We also are servants of the most high God and we are given His grace to make known His truth to the world around us. We are also empowered by God to do so as we listen to His Word.

Discipleship Prayer Thought

Almighty God, Grant us grace to be the servants in Your kingdom that You desire us to be. As You empowered Moses to lead Your people of promise and granted the apostles the revelation of Your Son, the Chosen One, grant us the blessing of listening to Your Word and making Your love known to the world around us. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**