



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.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT - SERIES C

March 13, 2016

From C.P.H. About the Cover: God created the earth for mankind’s use. Yet, mankind has not always used God’s creation as intended. We have taken advantage of God’s gifts, going so far as misusing them. As tenants of God’s vineyard, we owe God for all we have. But how has God been repaid? He sent His Son, and they threw Him out of the vineyard and killed Him. By His death, we are saved! Thanks be to God for His Son, our Savior!

First Reading; Isaiah 43:16–21

- ¹⁶Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸“Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.
¹⁹Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.
²⁰The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches,
for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: God promised to make a difference for His chosen people in order that they might declare His praise. He does make a difference in the lives of all believers.

Luther said, “For all which it is our duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.” The difference in our lives is the blessing of forgiveness and eternal life which is like water in the wilderness of our sin and a river of blessing in this dark world in which we live. Because of His grace, we can declare His praise not only in our worship experience, but in our lives of sacrifice and thanksgiving, in our daily testimony to others to His great mercy and in our willingness to serve Him in our various vocations.

Epistle Reading Philippians 3:8–14

⁸Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: Paul was not perfect, but he did work at making his life one that expressed the faith he held in the Lord Jesus Christ. What that meant was being willing to put aside his past and picture the glorious future he had in heaven. For us it is the same. We have a righteousness that comes from God and the power of the resurrection in our lives. We also can put aside the things that are rubbish in this life and by God’s grace, cling to those things that are wonderful and important as a witness to the life we have in Christ. This is an upward calling as Paul put it, and not something we can perfect. But it is a calling none the less and a joy that we have in our lives of discipleship.

Gospel Reading: Luke 20:9–20

⁹And he began to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while. ¹⁰When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹And he sent another servant. But they also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹²And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out. ¹³Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.’ ¹⁴But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.’ ¹⁵And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others.” When they heard this, they said, “Surely not!”

¹⁷But he looked directly at them and said, "What then is this that is written:

'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone'?

¹⁸"Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."

¹⁹The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people. ²⁰So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor.

Gospel Discipleship Notes: The parable Jesus tells in this reading reflects the history of God's chosen nation. God sent prophets who were rejected and killed and finally He sent His Son who also was killed by His own people. The application of the parable is to see Jesus as the "stone that the builders rejected but who has become the cornerstone." Recognizing Jesus as such gives reason for us to willingly and gladly serve Christ in our vocations. Recognizing Him as the One who had come to save sinful man encourages us to see our lives as reflections of His ministry of salvation for all people of the world.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read **Isaiah 43:16–21**

¹⁶Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸“Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.
¹⁹Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.
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for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

1. What picture might be recalled from the words of verse 17?
2. Why does God encourage not to merely reflect on the former times, but to look to the future?
3. What joyous futures do we anticipate not just in eternity but in this lifetime?
4. What is the purpose of our having been formed into God’s people?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read **Philippians 3:8–14**

⁸Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

6. What loss did Paul experience having come to faith in Christ?
7. How does the power of Christ’s resurrection affect your life?

8. How do you find yourself sharing in Christ's sufferings?
9. What does it mean that Paul pressed on to make it his own?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

READ: Luke 20:9–20

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11. What is this parable a picture of?
12. How do we know that the scribes and chief priests understood this picture?
13. How is their response to the parable a fulfillment of the prophecy of the parable?
14. What is the meaning of verse 18?
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 **Isaiah 43:16–21**

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²¹the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

1. What picture might be recalled from the words of verse 17?

The drowning of pharaoh's army in the red sea might have been the intention of recall in this verse.

2. Why does God encourage not to merely reflect on the former times, but to look to the future?

The ancient Israelites were very willing to recall their past history and often places far more importance on looking back than on looking ahead to God's vision for their future. The future for the people of God held the joy of redemption and salvation. It was to this that God wanted His people to envision and anticipate.

3. What joyous futures do we anticipate not just in eternity but in this lifetime?

Answers will vary.

4. What is the purpose of our having been formed into God's people?

According to verse 21 our purpose is to declare the praise of our God. This is done in worship, but also in our daily lives.

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

Read: **Philippians 3:8–14**

⁸Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share

his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

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6. What loss did Paul experience having come to faith in Christ?

Paul was headed toward a high position in the ranks of the Hebrew people and that would have included wealth and respect and valued wisdom. These were forsaken when Paul became an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ and from that time on, he willingly gave up everything just to have the opportunity to proclaim Christ to the lost and dying world.

7. How does the power of Christ's resurrection affect your life?

Answers will vary, but the power of the resurrection should surface assurance and certainty in the Joy of forgiveness and salvation in Jesus' name.

8. How do you find yourself sharing in Christ's sufferings?

Answers will vary.

9. What does it mean that Paul pressed on to make it his own?

Paul willingly worked at growing in his faith-life, causing it to be something he evidenced in all he did as best he could with the help of the Holy Spirit. Not that he perfected his life, but that he allowed God to work in and through him making his life a testimony of faithfulness to God.

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

READ: Luke 20:9–20

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11. What is this parable a picture of?

This parable is a picture of the history of God's people as they destroyed the prophets and would ultimately kill the Son of God.

12. How do we know that the scribes and chief priests understood this picture?

They responded to the threat of their destruction by saying, "Surely not." Then they plotted to have Jesus arrested and killed.

13. How is their response to the parable a fulfillment of the prophecy of the parable?

Like the tenants plotted to kill the owner's son, so also these Jewish leaders plotted to destroy the Son of God.

14. What is the meaning of verse 18?

To fall on the stone is to feel remorse for sin and lay those sins on Jesus who will. In this sense we fell the brokenness of our lives. To have the stone fall on us is to experience the severe judgment of God who crushes us completely in eternal death.

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

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

God has made a plan for the salvation of the world, something He wanted the Old Testament people to look forward to and something Paul was willing to give up everything to make known. He considered it a privilege to present and to represent Christ to the world. So should we! And because of the power of the resurrection in our lives, we can present Christ in our faithful witness and we can represent Him to the world around us. As modern disciples, this is our purpose and calling.

Discipleship Prayer Thought

Almighty God, Grant us grace to be willing to make known the praises of our God to the world around us. Fill us with the Holy Spirit that by daily contrition and repentance we can look forward to the joy of forgiveness and eternal life which are ours in Christ Jesus. Make us instrument of Your mercy, servants of Your praise and an army of willing soldiers carry the testimony of Christ into the world. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**