



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.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - SERIES C
JUNE 12, 2016

From C.P.H. About the Cover: Jesus’ statement exemplifies His love for all humankind: “Your sins are forgiven.” No greater gift can be given us. In those words, Jesus pours out His love for us and for creation. He spoke to this woman and now speaks to us. There are no better or more profound words for us and for our salvation. We live now and forever in His grace, for Jesus tells us, “Your sins are forgiven.”

First Reading; 2 Samuel 11:26—12:10, 13–14

²⁶When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. ²⁷And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

¹And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, “There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had very many flocks and herds, ³but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.” ⁵Then David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, ⁶and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.”

⁷Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. ⁸And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more. ⁹Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

¹³David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. ¹⁴Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die."

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: "You shall not die" Nathan told David. David's sin and the sins of all mankind deserve death, but God is merciful. The message, "The Lord also has put away your sin," which Nathan also announced to David is the message that still needs to be brought to sinful mankind today. But it will only be done when, after acknowledging our sin before God and receiving His mercy, we are given grace to make known God's mercy to others. Like Nathan, we can speak words of forgiveness to those who, along with us, fall short of the glory of God.

Epistle Reading Galatians 2:15–21; 3:10–14

¹⁵We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

¹⁷But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

¹⁰For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." ¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith."

¹²But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them." ¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—¹⁴so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: Paul reminded the Galatian Christians as well as us that nothing we can even do or even hope to do can cover the sins of our lives. The Law continues to condemn us, but the grace of God in Christ Jesus continues to assure us of righteousness, forgiveness, God's love and the gift of eternal life. Is there anything more important than that? Yet the vast majority of this world fails to know God's mercy. It is therefore imperative that by God's grace we speak to others and communicate the love of God as Paul did, perhaps through letters, perhaps through texting or email, perhaps through phone conversations, or in whatever means available to us so that the world might know the love of God in Christ Jesus for us.

Gospel Reading: Luke 7:36—8:3

³⁶One of the Pharisees asked [Jesus] to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. ³⁷And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, ³⁸and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." ⁴⁰And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

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¹Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

Gospel Discipleship Notes: Again in the reading we see the value and importance of forgiveness of sins. Is it something we value so highly? The sinful woman cried over her sins and sought God's forgiveness and she was forgiven. So also we ought to grieve over our sins and seek the same forgiveness. And God wants to grant that gift to us. He wants to grant it to all mankind. What a bold and important application for us to see the need of making God's love known to all the world and then responding to that need joyfully because we have been forgiven as was this woman in the text.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read 2 Samuel 11:26—12:10, 13–14

²⁶When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. ²⁷And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

¹And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had very many flocks and herds, ³but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." ⁵Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, ⁶and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

⁷Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. ⁸And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more. ⁹Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

¹³David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. ¹⁴Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die."

1. God had not wanted the people of Israel to have a king like the other nations. He reluctantly allowed the matter of a monarch however. How must He have felt as a result of Saul's departure from God and His Word and David (the second king) doing so as well?
2. What does David's anger over the rich man have to say about us?
3. What was meant by God's consequence of the sword never departing from David's house?
4. How are David's words in Psalm 32:5 a reflection of what took place in verse 13-14?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read Galatians 2:15–21; 3:10–14

¹⁵We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

¹⁷But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

¹⁰For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." ¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith." ¹²But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them." ¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—¹⁴so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

6. Paul reminded the Jewish believers that they are not justified by works in verse 16 and yet it was necessary to do so. Why?
7. Is the same reminder necessary in the Christian faith today?
8. What do verses 20-21 mean?
9. How is living by the law not a matter of faith?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

Read: Luke 7:36—8:3

³⁶One of the Pharisees asked [Jesus] to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. ³⁷And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, ³⁸and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." ⁴⁰And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

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¹Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

11. We neither see nor hear any outward confession of sin from the sinful woman. How do we know she was sorrowful for her sin?
12. What might this say to us when we are disturbed about the sinfulness of others?
13. What was Jesus' point about the larger and smaller debt and how should that affect us?
14. What did it mean that Jesus told the woman that her sins were forgiven?
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 2 Samuel 11:26—12:10, 13–14

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1. God had not wanted the people of Israel to have a king like the other nations. He reluctantly allowed the matter of a monarch however. How must He have felt as a result of Saul's departure from God and His Word and David (the second king) doing so as well?

Answers will vary but we certainly know that in this case, God was displeased for sure.

2. What does David's anger over the rich man have to say about us?

Sometimes we see the sin of others with anger in our hearts toward them without seeing the same sin in our own lives seemingly to disregard our own fallen condition of sin.

3. What was meant by God's consequence of the sword never departing from David's house?

With all sin there is consequence and this particular consequence meant that within David's household there would always be battling and hostility. David's son fought over the throne and ultimately the kingdom was divided between the north and the south. War and hostility among David's descendants is so even to this day.

4. How are David's words in Psalm 32:5 a reflection of what took place in verse 13-14?

The words of Psalm 32:5 (a part of our confessional liturgy) speak of what took place when David confessed his sin to Nathan and thus to God and Nathan announced God's undeserved grace in words of forgiveness.

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

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6. Paul reminded the Jewish believers that they are not justified by works in verse 16 and yet it was necessary to do so. Why?

The Jews had long been taught that we are saved by works of the law. They needed reminders constantly that the Law only condemns, it does not save.

7. Is the same reminder necessary in the Christian faith today?

Yes because even today we often slip into the misconceptions that we need to do something to earn God's grace and forgiveness wanting to somehow assure ourselves that we are worthy of forgiveness.

8. What do verses 20-21 mean?

We are now the children of God by faith and even though we continue to sin, we are His children. He has given us faith and forgiveness and will continue to do so. Our sins do not nullify His love or mercy in our lives.

9. How is living by the law not a matter of faith?

Living by the law means that we are relying on ourselves and what we do to earn God's favor and eternal life. Living as a matter of faith means that we trust in God's mercy through his Son, Jesus Christ for the favor of God and eternal life. Ironically, only God's Son has accomplished the perfection of the Law and He did it for us.

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

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¹Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

11. We neither see nor hear any outward confession of sin from the sinful woman. How do we know she was sorrowful for her sin?

Her actions of crying and washing the Savior's feet with her tears certainly are an outward sign of repentance and remorse for sin, but only God knows the heart and therefore Jesus, as true God, knew the heart of this woman. We only know of her true sorrow because Jesus identified it.

12. What might this say to us when we are disturbed about the sinfulness of others?

It is a reminder that only God knows what is in a person's heart. We tend to judge solely by actions, but our spiritual reality is that we do not know what is in a person's heart. That being the case, unless we see an unwillingness to confess sinfulness, we cannot withhold forgiveness from someone.

13. What was Jesus' point about the larger and smaller debt and how should that affect us?

His point is that as sinners, each of us should see the enormity of our sin and guilt in order to greatly appreciate the overwhelming grace and goodness of our God in the gift of His forgiveness.

14. What did it mean that Jesus told the woman that her sins were forgiven?

Only God has the authority to forgive sins and by telling the woman that her sins are forgiven, Jesus was identifying the fact that He is God. He also passed the authority to forgive the sins of the repentant sinners to the Church. But prior to that, no one had the authority to forgive sins but God Himself. For that reason, Jews continued to bring sacrifice offerings for sin and each year the Jews observed the atonement sacrifice for the sins of the nation. But that is now over and Christ has given the authority of God to the Church to declare forgiveness.

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

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

The forgiveness of sins is perhaps the most wonderful gift we can know and experience in our earthly life. It grants us the certainty of God's love and mercy as well as the assurance of eternal life in Jesus' name. This priceless gift is something God desires for the sake of the whole world and we are blessed to be partakers in His mercy. As a result of this great gift, we are also blessed to be able to share it with others throughout the world through our own witness, our support of Gospel ministry both at home and abroad, and through our willingness to show forgiveness and the love of Christ to others around us

Discipleship Prayer Thought

Almighty God, as You extended Your mercy through the prophet Nathan and assured David that His sins were forgiven, so You extend the same through the pastors of our churches as they also announce the forgiveness and love You have for sinful man. Help us to be filled with Your grace so that we, too, might extend Your grace and love toward others, that they also might know the fullness of Your grace in their own lives. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**