



**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.

**THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - SERIES C**  
**AUGUST 14, 2016**

**From C.P.H. About the Cover:** Jesus was fully aware of the suffering He would endure for our eternal salvation. His death on the cross would be the ultimate price He would pay for our eternal life. Jesus was baptized with water by John, just as we were baptized, but His death by suffering is beyond anything we could ever imagine or endure. Thanks be to God, who loves us so that He gave us His only-begotten Son!

**First Reading: Jeremiah 23:16–29**

<sup>16</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>17</sup>They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, ‘It shall be well with you’; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, ‘No disaster shall come upon you.’”

<sup>18</sup>For who among them has stood in the council of the LORD to see and to hear his word, or who has paid attention to his word and listened?

<sup>19</sup>Behold, the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked.

<sup>20</sup>The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his heart. In the latter days you will understand it clearly.

<sup>21</sup>“I did not send the prophets, yet they ran;  
I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

<sup>22</sup>But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.

<sup>23</sup>"Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God afar off? <sup>24</sup>Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD. <sup>25</sup>I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' <sup>26</sup>How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart, <sup>27</sup>who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal? <sup>28</sup>Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares the LORD.

<sup>29</sup>Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?"

1<sup>st</sup> Reading Discipleship Notes: People may very well be spiritual but not religious. Such was the case for the people in the days of Jeremiah's day and such are the case for people in our own day. Many wish to listen to spiritual things, but they fail to turn to the that which is true and of God alone. As modern disciples of the living God, it is vital for us to listen solely to God's Word and focus on His truth only. That truth looks to the Law that condemns us for the sin we constantly commit in thought, word and deed. But is also looks to what God has done for us and the salvation He has given to us through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. It therefore behooves modern believers to heed the Word of God alone for spiritual truth and guidance.

### **Epistle Reading      Hebrews 11:17–31, 12:1–3**

<sup>17</sup>By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, <sup>18</sup>of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." <sup>19</sup>He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. <sup>20</sup>By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. <sup>21</sup>By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. <sup>22</sup>By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

<sup>23</sup>By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. <sup>24</sup>By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup>choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. <sup>26</sup>He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. <sup>27</sup>By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. <sup>28</sup>By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

<sup>29</sup>By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as if on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. <sup>30</sup>By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup>By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set

before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

<sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: Faith alone is what constitutes our righteousness. That becomes obvious when we look at the words and actions of our lives which are filled with unrighteousness. That faith is a gift of God coming to us from Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. As disciples of that Lord it behooves us to therefore recognize this great truth and to respond to the Savior's gift of faith by looking solely to Him for our salvation, clinging tightly to His Word for truth and guidance and responding to His grace with lives of service.

**Gospel Reading:**

**Luke 12:49–53**

<sup>49</sup>[Jesus said:] "I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!

<sup>50</sup>I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!

<sup>51</sup>Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. <sup>52</sup>For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three.

<sup>53</sup>They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

Gospel Discipleship Notes: These words of Jesus are hard to hear and to understand, but the truth of the matter is, Christians are set apart from the world and they are divisionary. Faith in Christ will divide families, households, and even nations of people. Christ Himself faced division even among His disciples. Sin separates, but as modern disciples we can rest assured that as we cling in faith to Jesus, He will be with us and we can continue to make His name known in spite of the conflicts that occur around us as a result of the faith He has worked in us through Holy Baptism and growth in His Word of truth.

## Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

### Read                    **Jeremiah 23:16–29**

<sup>16</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>17</sup>They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.'"

<sup>18</sup>For who among them has stood in the council of the LORD to see and to hear his word, or who has paid attention to his word and listened?

<sup>19</sup>Behold, the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked.

<sup>20</sup>The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his heart. In the latter days you will understand it clearly.

<sup>21</sup>"I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

<sup>22</sup>But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.

<sup>23</sup>"Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God afar off? <sup>24</sup>Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD. <sup>25</sup>I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' <sup>26</sup>How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart, <sup>27</sup>who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal? <sup>28</sup>Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares the LORD.

<sup>29</sup>Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?"

1. How would those of Jeremiah's day know that a prophet was speaking the Word of God or not?
2. What was meant by "In the latter days you will understand it clearly"?
3. What was an evidence of false prophets shown in verse 22?
4. What does the revelation of God being at hand mean to you and to the Church?
5. What is meant by verse 29?
6. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

**Read Hebrews 11:17–31, 12:1–3**

<sup>17</sup>By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, <sup>18</sup>of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” <sup>19</sup>He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. <sup>20</sup>By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. <sup>21</sup>By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. <sup>22</sup>By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

<sup>23</sup>By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict. <sup>24</sup>By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, <sup>25</sup>choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. <sup>26</sup>He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. <sup>27</sup>By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. <sup>28</sup>By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

<sup>29</sup>By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as if on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. <sup>30</sup>By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup>By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

<sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

7. How do examples of obedience like those listed in this reading testify to the faith?
8. What great cloud of witnesses in your lifetime helps you endure in the faith?
9. What does the inclusion of a prostitute in this reading say to the power of faith?
10. How is Jesus the founder and perfecter of faith?
11. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

**Read: Luke 12:49–53**

<sup>49</sup>[Jesus said:] “I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!  
<sup>50</sup>I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!  
<sup>51</sup>Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. <sup>52</sup>For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three.

<sup>53</sup>They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

12. What did Jesus mean when He said He had come to cast fire on the earth?
13. What baptism was Jesus talking about in verse 50 since He had already been baptized by John?
14. What does Jesus mean by bringing about division and why is this necessary?
15. How do we get beyond the emotional distress caused by such division in the church and in families?
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 Jeremiah 23:16–29

<sup>16</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>17</sup>They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.'"

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1. How would those of Jeremiah's day know that a prophet was speaking the Word of God or not?

*It is clear in the consciences of sinful man whether or not something is of God or not. Romans 2:14 clarifies that the Law of God is written in the heart. For prophets to proclaim anything contrary to God's Law and to merely paint a picture that all is well in the sight of God, the conscience would have to take effect. Of course, what one does with that conscious effect is yet another matter.*

2. What was meant by "In the latter days you will understand it clearly"?

*The latter days points both to what consequences would be faced in the future, but more specifically it points to the consequence of sin that would be experienced on the cross of Calvary when the anger of God would be fully executed on His own dear Son.*

3. What was an evidence of false prophets shown in verse 22?

*The evil ways and evil deeds would be evidence of falsehood. The integrity of the servant of God will also be evidenced in the ways and deeds of his/her life.*

4. What does the revelation of God being at hand mean to you and to the Church?

*Answers will vary.*

5. What is meant by verse 29?

*This is a reference to the work of the Law of God and how it condemns, kills and destroys. As a fire burns and a hammer destroys, so also the Law of God brings about the same thing in the lives of people.*

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

**Read: Hebrews 11:17–31, 12:1–3**

<sup>17</sup>By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, <sup>18</sup>of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." <sup>19</sup>He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. <sup>20</sup>By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. <sup>21</sup>By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. <sup>22</sup>By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

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<sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

7. How do examples of obedience like those listed in this reading testify to the faith?

*Answers will vary but the ultimate testimony is that faith is evidenced not merely by words, but deeds as well.*

8. What great cloud of witnesses in your lifetime helps you endure in the faith?

*Answers will vary.*

9. What does the inclusion of a prostitute in this reading say to the power of faith?

*It says that faith alone saves even the worst of sinners. God is gracious and good and desires not the death of the wicked but the salvation of the sinners.*

10. How is Jesus the founder and perfecter of faith?

*First of all Jesus was perfectly holy and fulfilled complete faithfulness for us. Secondly He works faith in us through the Gospel as the Holy Spirit works in our hearts so that we are found perfected by faith. We cannot be perfectly holy on our own, but Christ Jesus works faith in us perfecting that faith by making us holy in His precious blood.*

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

**READ: Luke 12:49–53**

<sup>49</sup>[Jesus said:] "I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!  
<sup>50</sup>I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!  
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<sup>53</sup>They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

12. What did Jesus mean when He said He had come to cast fire on the earth?

*He was making reference to the judgement that is cast on the earth because of sin. That judgement is upon all mankind but it would fall on Him personally for the sins of the whole world. In doing so, this fire of judgement would divide those of faith from those of unbelief but secure life and salvation for those who believe while bringing eternal devastation to the unbeliever.*

13. What baptism was Jesus talking about in verse 50 since He had already been baptized by John?

*This was a reference to the sufferings and death He would have to endure for us making our baptism with water and the Word the means by which He would transfer His sacrifice for sin to us.*

14. What does Jesus mean by bringing about division and why is this necessary?

*There will always be a division between those who believe and trust in Jesus and those who do not. This division will evidence itself in families, neighborhoods, etc. It will be evidenced as well in the manner in which people live out their lives and how they make testimony of their faith. It can also be about not merely division, but also persecution.*

15. What does Jesus mean by selling your possessions and giving them to the needy?

*Jesus does not mean for us to sell everything we have so as to be in poverty ourselves, but He is illustrating that where we have excess, we can easily give up things we have for the sake of those in need.*

16. How do we get beyond the emotional distress caused by such division in the church and in families?

*This is difficult because sometimes it might mean a family member is disciplined by the church and when that happens, there is the added dimension of the division becoming public. To get beyond the emotional distress, the believer must live in constant compassion and prayer for God's mercy to work in the hearts of those who separate themselves from God and His way of salvation.*

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

## Discipleship Bulletin Blub

Evidence of faith has always been a reality of what God works in people through His Word. When faith is evidenced, there is also an inevitable reality of division between the believer and unbeliever. We are called to live in a divided world all around us where both righteousness and unrighteousness dwell. As modern believers, by the grace of God at work in our hearts, we can live in such a way as to evidence faith to the world around us and in doing so realize that we can also be making a witness to those whose lives are not in fellowship with god and His Word.

## Discipleship Prayer Thought

Almighty and Most merciful God, grant us Your grace in this world of division between the righteous and the unrighteous. Grant us peace to know You through Your Word and the promise of forgiveness and life which is ours in Christ Jesus and grant us strength of faith to make a faithful witness of our confidence for salvation in our Savior's name. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**