



**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.

**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - SERIES C**  
**SEPTEMBER 18, 2016**

**From C.P.H. About the Cover:** God has blessed us with so much in order to well supply our needs and much, much more. We are to use His gifts to His glory and for the benefit of our family and others. But they are not a blessing when they become more important to us than the faith He has given us or the love He has for us. We are to fear and love God above anything else in this life.

**First Reading: Amos 8:4–7**

<sup>4</sup>Hear this, you who trample on the needy and bring the poor of the land to an end,  
<sup>5</sup>saying, “When will the new moon be over, that we may sell grain?  
And the Sabbath, that we may offer wheat for sale,  
that we may make the ephah small and the shekel great  
and deal deceitfully with false balances,  
<sup>6</sup>that we may buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals  
and sell the chaff of the wheat?”  
<sup>7</sup>The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: “Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.”

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading Discipleship Notes:** Amos identified an age-old problem with sinful man and that is the issue of dishonesty. In this case the dishonesty had to do with the financial mistreatment of those who are poor or needy. Dishonesty still exists in the modern world as we all well know. For modern disciples, this is a matter that must not occur among us. Instead, by the grace of God and it alone, modern disciples can display honor and integrity shown as a virtue to the ungodly world around us and thus, perhaps even drawing attention to Him who enables us to live honestly.

## **Epistle Reading            1 Timothy 2:1–15**

<sup>1</sup>First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. <sup>7</sup>For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

<sup>8</sup>I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; <sup>9</sup>likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, <sup>10</sup>but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. <sup>11</sup>Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. <sup>12</sup>I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup>For Adam was formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup>and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup>Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: Paul gives a number of encouragements for Godly living including such things as prayer, respectable apparel, and the manner in which we learn and love. All of these matters are certainly appropriate applications for the modern disciple. Applied in the proper perspective of the modern world, and empowered to do them by the grace of God, we can achieve an appropriate understanding of each of these encouragements and put them into practice in such a way as to serve one another in love and honor God in the process.

## **Gospel Reading:            Luke 16:1–15**

<sup>1</sup>[Jesus] also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. <sup>2</sup>And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’ <sup>3</sup>And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup>I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’ <sup>5</sup>So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ <sup>6</sup>He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ <sup>7</sup>Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ <sup>8</sup>The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. <sup>9</sup>And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

<sup>10</sup>“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. <sup>11</sup>If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous

wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? <sup>12</sup>And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? <sup>13</sup>No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

<sup>14</sup>The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him.

<sup>15</sup>And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

Gospel Discipleship Notes: This reading is certainly one that can offer a great deal of confusion for the reader. But the primary issue here is really that of verse 13. No one can serve two masters and we cannot serve God and money at the same time. In this modern western world and culture in which we live, this temptation to do so is perhaps more an issue than we can even imagine. The Pharisees were lovers of money, but so are we! Look at advertisements on television and they certainly reflect this truth. But by the grace of God we can utilize the money God gives us for Godly purposes and serve God in the process. This is a primary application we find in this reading.

## Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

### Read **Amos 8:4–7**

<sup>4</sup>Hear this, you who trample on the needy and bring the poor of the land to an end,  
<sup>5</sup>saying, “When will the new moon be over, that we may sell grain?  
And the Sabbath, that we may offer wheat for sale,  
that we may make the ephah small and the shekel great  
and deal deceitfully with false balances,  
<sup>6</sup>that we may buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals  
and sell the chaff of the wheat?”  
<sup>7</sup>The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: “Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.”

1. What does it mean to “trample” on the needy?
2. What does the new moon have to do with when one sells grain?
3. What would be a modern day equivalent to deceitful balances?
4. How does verse 7 make you feel about your own dealings?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

### Read **1 Timothy 2:1–15**

<sup>1</sup>First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. <sup>7</sup>For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

<sup>8</sup>I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; <sup>9</sup>likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, <sup>10</sup>but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. <sup>11</sup>Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. <sup>12</sup>I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup>For Adam was formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup>and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup>Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

6. How are verses 1 and 2 to be carried out especially in the Church?
7. How might we reflect God’s desire of verse 4?

8. Considering the fact that prayer should not be offered with anger or quarreling, what ways might we approach prayer in order not to offer it in such a manner?
9. How should we view the restrictions Paul made on women in verses 9-15?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

**Read: Luke 16:1-15**

<sup>1</sup>[Jesus] also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. <sup>2</sup>And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' <sup>3</sup>And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup>I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.' <sup>5</sup>So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' <sup>6</sup>He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' <sup>7</sup>Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' <sup>8</sup>The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. <sup>9</sup>And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

<sup>10</sup>"One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. <sup>11</sup>If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? <sup>12</sup>And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? <sup>13</sup>No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

<sup>14</sup>The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

11. How are we to understand the rich man in this reading?
12. How do you understand verse 9?
13. How might verse 11 be understood in the modern church?
14. What verse of this reading sums up the whole reading?
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            **Amos 8:4–7**

<sup>4</sup>Hear this, you who trample on the needy and bring the poor of the land to an end,  
<sup>5</sup>saying, "When will the new moon be over, that we may sell grain?  
And the Sabbath, that we may offer wheat for sale,  
that we may make the ephah small and the shekel great  
and deal deceitfully with false balances,  
<sup>6</sup>that we may buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals  
and sell the chaff of the wheat?"  
<sup>7</sup>The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: "Surely I will never forget any of their deeds."

1. What does it mean to "trample" on the needy?

*This was an expression meaning "to take advantage of" the needy. Being in need is easy prey for the one who has what the needy needs. Taking advantage profits the one who does the trampling and disables the one who is in need.*

2. What does the new moon have to do with when one sells grain?

*There are numerous Old Testament references to the observation of the New Moon and all other festivals such as that of 2 Chronicles 2:4, "Behold, I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, dedicating it to Him, to burn fragrant incense before Him and to set out the showbread continually, and to offer burnt offerings morning and evening, on Sabbaths and on new moons and on the appointed feasts of the LORD our God, this being required forever in Israel." New Moon days were days of sacrifice and observed as reverently as the Sabbath was observed. While there are those who would take advantage of the poor and needy, they certainly wanted to appear religious and therefore observed the New Moon and Sabbath by not doing business on those days.*

3. What would be a modern day equivalent to deceitful balances?

*Allow for suggestions but cheating on taxes, over charging, usury, etc. would be examples today.*

4. How does verse 7 make you feel about your own dealings?

*Allow for personal responses, but it is noteworthy that God does not forget those sins for which we are unrepentant. Therefore it is vital for us to continuously make confession of all our sins, even those which we do not know as Luther tells us.*

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

### Read:            **1 Timothy 2:1–15**

<sup>1</sup>First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

<sup>5</sup>For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. <sup>7</sup>For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

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6. How are verses 1 and 2 to be carried out especially in the Church?

*It is common to include prayers for all people and particularly for those in positions of authority in the government and in the church during the time of prayer in a worship service. Of course this should also be a common occurrence for Christians at any time.*

7. How might we reflect God's desire of verse 4?

*Hopefully it will be reflected in the manner in which we witness Christ in our lives especially to the unbelieving world around us.*

8. Considering the fact that prayer should not be offered with anger or quarreling, what ways might we approach prayer in order not to offer it in such a manner?

*We must always approach prayer with a humble heart recognizing our own sinfulness and willing to confess all our sin including those sins of anger and acknowledging our sinful behavior of quarreling.*

9. How should we view the restrictions Paul made on women in verses 9-15?

*Answers will vary. This can become a difficult question to address. 1) The issues of attire and appearance addresses the need for women not to draw attention to themselves and thus away from Christ. If there is to be something that women (or men) should show, it would be their lives of service and good works. 2) Learning in quiet submissiveness simply means not to assume a greater station in than one should. Women were not educated in the Scriptures in the early Christian Church, to learn in quiet submissiveness means simply to learn by listening and growing. 3) And to assume spiritual authority over men was simply not a reflection of God's design for order in the Church. A male is to assume spiritual authority (such as that of a pastor) as he assumes certain duties that represent Christ in the Church.*

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

**READ: Luke 16:1-15**

<sup>1</sup>[Jesus] also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.

<sup>2</sup>And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' <sup>3</sup>And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup>I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.' <sup>5</sup>So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' <sup>6</sup>He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' <sup>7</sup>Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' <sup>8</sup>The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. <sup>9</sup>And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

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11. How are we to understand the rich man in this reading?

*Many wish to assume that this individual is a representation of God. This is simply not the case. The rich man was one who is as shrewd and dishonest as the manager. That is why the rich man commended the manager for his shrewdness. Such is the way of the world and certainly the way of the Pharisees who were lovers of money.*

12. How do you understand verse 9?

*In this verse our Lord Jesus here exhorts us to provide for our comfortable reception to the happiness of heaven by making good use of our possessions and enjoyments in this world: "Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth (or the wealth of this world), so that when it fails (at the time of our death) they may receive you into the eternal dwellings." Christ is calling us to be good stewards of His earthly gifts for the welfare of others and the honor of God because ultimately these things of this world will mean nothing to us and do us no good.*

13. How might verse 11 be understood in the modern church?

*Dishonesty, mishandling of goods received from God, and poor stewardship of things we received from God is shown to others. When this is the case, true riches of heaven will not be entrusted to us from God or trusted of us from others.*

14. What verse of this reading sums up the whole reading?

*Verse 13*

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

## **Discipleship Bulletin Blub**

Greed leads to all sorts of issues including dishonesty in dealing with money and goods. God desires a greater way of life for His people and that is to honor Him and love Him before all things else, even wealth. We cannot serve two masters! God therefore desires appropriate stewardship from His people and by the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we can grow to serve others with the gifts we receive from God and honor Him with the ways in which we use those gifts.

## **Discipleship Prayer Thought**

Almighty and Most merciful God, grant us Your grace to be appropriate stewards or managers of those things we receive from Your goodness and mercy. Guide us by the Holy Spirit to serve You with our resources and to help others with those resources rather than to take advantage of them. Move us to find great joy in our lives of financial management so that it honors You and frees us from becoming tied to our wealth or to the things of this world. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**