



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.

PENTECOST SUNDAY - SERIES C

May 15, 2016

From C.P.H. About the Cover: Praise God the Father for His gift of the Holy Spirit, who instructs us concerning Christ Jesus, the Father’s only Son, who lived and died for the Father’s creation. The Holy Spirit is witness to all God’s redeeming work—the demonstration of the Father’s desire that all people be saved. This is the faith to which the Holy Spirit draws us.

First Reading; Genesis 11:1–9

¹Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ²And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” ⁵And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶And the LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” ⁸So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: Failing to pay attention to God's Word for sinful man, we will always attempt to do things that are contrary to His will. The Tower of Babel was one such example. God acknowledged that man can and will do about anything and that *"nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them."* Supposedly that could be a compliment, but when the impossible becomes contrary to God's will, then we have a problem. Yet look at God's grace in this incident. He didn't send a flood as He had before or send down fire from heaven to completely destroy mankind as He would eventually do to Sodom and Gomorrah, He merely sent confusion in language. It has taken these many centuries to undo that confusion and still we have difficulty doing so. But the one thing that can be done in spite of that confusion is to tell the love of Jesus Christ to those around us. Even where language becomes an obstacle, by God's grace we can make the love of Christ known through acts of mercy and kindness all in the name of Jesus.

Epistle Reading Acts 2:1–21

¹When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." ¹²And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine."

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷"And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; ²⁰the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. ²¹And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Epistle Discipleship Notes: *“And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* This statement is really an application for our lives to make known the name of Jesus Christ in our lives. St. Augustine said something to the effect that in all things we are to witness Christ and when necessary we should use words. As the disciples made Christ known to the people on Pentecost and the Holy Spirit did His work of converting hearts and souls so that 3000 were baptized that day, it didn’t end there. Each day people kept making Christ known and the numbers of believers were added to each day. They didn’t just come to faith and go home to do nothing about this wonderful Gospel, they talked about it, and they lived it out with love. That is our application as modern disciples as well so that everyone may call on the name of the Lord and be saved.

Gospel Reading: John 14:23–31

²³Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

²⁵“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

²⁸You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. ³⁰I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, ³¹but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

Gospel Discipleship Notes: Each of the readings appointed for today are about the Word of God and the blessing we receive in paying close attention to it. This is God’s Word as we are reminded in verse 24 and part of the work of the Holy Spirit is to remind us of His Word (vr. 26) so that we can make it known to others. By the grace of God, we are given peace in our hearts and the wisdom to speak the Word of God as the Spirit of God works in us.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read Genesis 11:1–9

¹Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ²And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." ⁵And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." ⁸So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

1. What would it have been like to have one language in the world and how might it have been a blessing?
2. How is what the people said as they planned the building of the city and the tower an irony?
3. What did God mean in verse 6?
4. How was Pentecost a sort of reversal of what took place at Babel?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read Acts 2:1–21

¹When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and

Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.”¹² And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”¹³ But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.”

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷“And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; ²⁰the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. ²¹And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

6. What did the “day of Pentecost” mean and why was it celebrated that so many people were together in Jerusalem?
7. What was meant by the “other tongues” that the Spirit gave to the disciples?
8. Why was it important for Peter to identify that this was a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy?
9. How is verse 17 one that associates itself well with Ezekiel in the first reading for today?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

Read: John 14:23–31

²³Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

²⁵“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. ³⁰I

will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me,
³¹but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the
Father. Rise, let us go from here.

11. What must accompany love for Christ?
12. What was Christ promising in verse 26?
13. How is the peace that Christ left the disciples still present in us today and how is it given to us?
14. What great promise do we receive from Christ in verse 28?
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 **Genesis 11:1-9**

¹Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ²And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." ⁵And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." ⁸So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

1. What would it have been like to have one language in the world and how might it have been a blessing?

Answers will vary.

2. How is what the people said as they planned the building of the city and the tower an irony?

They said that they wanted to build the city and the tower so as not to become dispersed over the earth and that is exactly what happened to them as a result of doing that which was contrary to the will of God.

3. What did God mean in verse 6?

Where there is the ability to communicate, the end result is amazing. God knows that and in many respects has allowed the ability to communicate to accomplish amazing results. Consider the achievements of the medical world, space exploration, etc. It happens as a result of clear communication of many as they put their minds and words to work. Think how quickly it would have happened if language would not have been an obstacle. Think how much more evil there might have been as a result as well. The ability to communicate clearly possesses enormous power.

4. How was Pentecost a sort of reversal of what took place at Babel?

They all heard the apostles preaching in their own native language.

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

Read: Acts 2:1–21

¹When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

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6. What did the "day of Pentecost" mean and why was it celebrated that so many people were together in Jerusalem?

The day of Pentecost was the fiftieth day after the Sabbath of Passover week (Leviticus 23:15-16) and thus the first day of the week (Sunday). Pentecost was also called the Feast of Weeks (Deuteronomy 16:10) marking the completion of the barley harvest when the sickle was first put to the barley and the grain and chaff were separated (a picture of divine judgment talked about by John the Baptist in Matthew 3 when the Christ would baptize with the "Holy Spirit and Fire"). It was also a religious festival for the Jews recalling the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai and declared a holy convocation on which there was no work to be done and every male Israelite was required to appear at the sanctuary (Leviticus 23:21), thus the reason for all these Jews to be in Jerusalem at the time.

7. What was meant by the "other tongues" that the Spirit gave to the disciples?

This is best understood by the response recorded in verses 6 and 8 in which it clearly states that they were given the ability to speak in the very languages the people spoke in the regions of the world from whence they had come. The disciples were given a gift which in a sense reversed the curse of time since the Tower of Babel incident in order to be able to proclaim the mighty works of God (prophesying as the elders did in the earlier reading from Numbers 11).

8. Why was it important for Peter to identify that this was a fulfillment of Joel's prophesy?

Jewish people were always wanting and needing the assurance of prophecies fulfilled. If something could not be associated with prophetic statements, it was not to be considered. It was therefore common among the apostles in the early church to associate the events surrounding the life and ministry and death and resurrection of Jesus with prophetic truths, thus proving Jesus to be the anticipated Messiah and Savior of all mankind.

9. How is verse 17 one that associates itself well with Ezekiel in the first reading for today?

The Holy Spirit works through the preached and proclaimed word of God. Ezekiel was urged to do so and the spiritually dead became alive.

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

READ: John 14:23–31

²³Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

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11. What must accompany love for Christ?

Keeping the Word of God must accompany love for Christ.

12. What was Christ promising in verse 26?

Christ was promising what took place on Pentecost with the coming of the Holy Spirit in a most spectacular manner.

13. How is the peace that Christ left the disciples still present in us today and how is it given to us?

Answers will vary, but the matter of the assurance of forgiveness and salvation should be emphasized. There is no greater peace than this. This is especially seen in the lives of those who are near their end in this life when the peace that surpasses all understanding is evident.

14. What great promise do we receive from Christ in verse 28?

Christ was here promising His return one day.

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

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

As modern day disciples of Christ, we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit who brought us to faith and who has kept us in that faith. The Word of God has been a means for this work to be accomplished. Because of God's grace we can be instruments who can make witness to this divine work of God. In the church today, this message still brings life to a spiritually dead world of unbelief. In His grace, He has given us the peace of forgiveness and life and wants this gift given to all the world.

Discipleship Prayer Thought

Almighty God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, You have given us peace and joy in the assurance of forgiveness, life and salvation in Jesus' name. Grant us the great gift of joy and willingness to share that peace with the world by communicating Your Word to those with whom we come into contact as well as those we will never know in this life through our support of the Church's mission. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**