



2nd Quarter 2015 Lesson 4 – The Call to Discipleship

SABBATH

“Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me’ ” (Luke 9:23, NKJV).

I like the definition of Disciple = Pupil, from the lesson. Since Christ is the source of infinite knowledge, we will always be learning [see the 1st Commandment].

“God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, will quicken all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfill the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciple that the Christian becomes like Him in mind and character.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 251.

It’s reassuring that God “takes men as they are, ...” It’s clear that we need to be teachable to be true disciples.

SUNDAY

Fishers of Men

What can we learn from the miracle of Luke 5: 1-11?

1. Nature obeys it’s Creator.
2. When God gives, He gives abundantly.
3. We need to be willing to follow, even if we don’t know the outcome.
4. We may be called to give up what we have become accustomed to.
5. We see the presentation of Truth [Christ’s teaching from the boat], the application of His Truth [“nevertheless, at Your word.”], evidence of Trustworthiness [boatloads of fish], recognition of God’s Holiness / our sickness [“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.”], the beginnings of the eradication of fear/selfishness [“Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.”], and strengthened faith / works [leaving the boats / catch and following Jesus].
6. Anything else?

I like the lessons observation in the bottom section about Peter’s sinfulness prompting him to want to be separated from Jesus. It wasn’t “The Lamb’s” wrath wanting Peter gone, was it? “What is it about sin ... that pushes us away from God?” Thoughts? Which Law lens are we looking through?

MONDAY

Selection of the Twelve



Why twelve apostles? Why were none of them “church leaders”? What were their names?

When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. Luke 6: 13-16.

I forgot there were 2 Judases. Also, interesting that He included a “Zealot” in the bunch.

Is there a significance in the number 12? 12 months, 12 hours AM/PM, 12 sons of Jacob [including Joseph’s Ephraim and Manasseh] leading to the 12 tribes of Israel, Christ was 12 years old when he is first recorded as speaking [teaching the church leaders], Rev 12:1 mentions a woman [symbolic Bride of Christ] wearing a crown of 12 stars, and the 144,00 [12 X 12 X 1,000], 12 layers of the Holy City’s foundation, 12 gates in to the Holy City, the City, itself, being a 12, 000 furlong [1500 miles] cube. Any other 12’s you can think of?

What is common to the twelve apostles? What is different about them?

TUESDAY

Commissioning of the Apostles

What insights can we glean from Christ giving the 12 power and authority to cast out all demons, and to cure disease? To proclaim the Kingdom of God, and heal the sick? Why take nothing with them, save the clothes on their backs? Why stay only in one house?

This is a wonderful EGW quote from the lesson:

“As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”—
Ellen G. White, Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 333.

All His biddings are enablings. Does this give us any additional insights on the Ten Commandments?

They were to preach “the Kingdom of God” and its nearness. What is the Kingdom of God that they were to preach? Is it sensible that this was done in concert with the healing of the sick?

WEDNESDAY

Sending the Seventy

Luke Ch. 10 states that Christ prepared seventy-two to precede Him to the towns He was to travel. Was this just good marketing or something else? Why not greet anyone on the road? Note in v. 16: “Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me.”



Also, in v. 18: “I saw Satan fall like lightning from Heaven.” Why did Jesus use this simile? Was He talking about a past or future event? or both?

The lesson makes an excellent point in the last part of the 2nd paragraph:

“But what is important is that Jesus, as a trainer of leaders for the church, has left a strategy not to concentrate power and responsibility in a few but to spread it across the spectrum of disciples.”

Has Protestant Christianity followed this model, or have we followed the Imperial Roman model?

The lesson asks a great question in the bottom section. “What are some of the things that we have seen that prophets and kings wanted to see, but didn’t?”

THURSDAY

The Cost of Discipleship

Here’s another EGW quote from PP 599, 600 [emphasis supplied]:

All things in nature testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy. His prohibitions and injunctions are not intended merely to display His authority, but in all that He does He has the well-being of His children in view. He does not require them to give up anything that it would be for their best interest to retain.

Note that God does not arbitrarily “just throw His weight around”. Does this give us some better perspective and understanding on the Ten Commandments? Especially the 4th one?

If God does not require us to give up anything beneficial, then what is the real cost of discipleship?

From Friday’s Lesson:

“Lifting the cross cuts away self from the soul, and places man where he learns how to bear Christ’s burdens. We cannot follow Christ without wearing His yoke, without lifting the cross and bearing it after Him. If our will is not in accord with the divine requirements, we are to deny our inclinations, give up our darling desires, and step in Christ’s footsteps.”—Ellen G. White, Sons and Daughters of God, p. 69.

Look at Luke 9: 23-27.

23 Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? 26 Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. 27 “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”

What does He mean “take up their cross daily and follow me”? How do we lose our life if we want to save it, and save it if we lose it for Him? Also, what did He mean by “..., some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God.” ?