**Turning Your Children Into Disciples**

**By**

**Jared D. Hill**

**B.A Religion, MDIV, ThM**

***Why This Study?***

The desire to write this study was birthed out of my own passion for discipleship. I spend over half my hours in ministry discipling men. Why? Because I believe that is what New Testament Christianity is all about. Also, I am passionate about discipling my own children. We have consistent family worship times, in which I diligently teach my children the scriptures. This study is a marriage between these two passions. What I address in this study is the fundamentals of what it means to be a disciple. The truths are taken and put in small, easy to understand segments so that a child may start to learn what biblical Christianity looks like.

As a parent, it is your responsibility to teach and train your child in the things of God. This study is meant to be a resource for you to accomplish this.

***How it Works***

The study is divided into nine weeks. Each week has an over-arching theme, which is divided into sub topics. These sub topics are not meant to be discussed in one setting, but at various times throughout the week. In the margins there are green Parent Cubes. These cubes are filled with suggestions on how to teach your children the certain truths that are being addressed each week. Also, there is a Parents’ Notes section in the back. This section is meant to be used by you in preparation for your time with your child. Here you will find more suggestions and more depth.

The study is intended for children ages 5-9. However, it is written in such a way that you can either make it simpler, or add to it. It depends on where your child is, and it also depends on whether or not you want to take a child who is age 10-12 through the study. This is where the Parents’ Notes section will come in handy in helping you go more in depth with your child.

**Introduction: What is a Disciple?**

The word “disciple” just means “a learner.” This word is used more than any other word in the bible to refer to a person who is in a personal relationship with Jesus. In fact, it is used 269 times! the word “Christian” is only used 3 times, and the word “believers” is only used 2 times. So, I think it is safe to say that the message in scripture is that we are called to be disciples.

**The Disciple’s Heart, part 1**

**Week 1**

In the introduction, we talked about what a disciple is. Here, we want to talk about the attitudes or the *heart* of a disciple. In the Bible, the heart is very important. It is what God looks at. It is also what He changes, and is the source of our words and actions. Because of sin, our hearts have become corrupt. Now, as a disciple who has been born again, God gives us a new heart with new desires. In Matthew 5, we see the attitudes that the disciple is to have.

The world will try and tell us that the key to a blessed life is having lots of money, no sadness, and being liked by everyone. Jesus, however, shows us that the opposite is true. If one wants to live a blessed life as His disciple, it involves being poor, having sorrow, and experiencing persecution.

*1. Spiritually needy*. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (5:3).

***Parents, before moving on to the next point, make sure your child grasps the basic idea of this concept. Feel free to use as many examples as necessary. This is an important foundational principle not only for salvation, but for the life of a disciple.***

What do you think it takes to own your own kingdom? A lot of money? A lot of power? A huge army? This is what the world says you need in order gain a kingdom. The world says you need to be somebody great to have your own kingdom.

Not so with God. If you want to inherit His kingdom and all the blessings that come with it, you actually have to be poor. Not poor in material things, but poor in spirit. In other words, you have to recognize that you have nothing to offer God. Jesus says that it is these people who actually inherit the kingdom of God.

So, if we want to know God more and experience His rule and presence in our life, we have to have this attitude.

**Discipleship Principle: In order to become spiritually rich, we must first see that we are spiritually poor.**

*2. Grieving heart.* “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (5:4). I think we would all agree that we don’t like feeling sad. It’s not very fun. The world tells us that sadness is a bad thing, and that all we should do is seek to be happy. The world will tell us that happiness is the main goal of life.

Not so with Jesus. But what does Jesus mean by “mourning”? Mourning is a word that simply means grieving or being sad over something. I am sure you can think of things that you have been sad over. However, Jesus is referring to something much deeper here other than being sad over something that has happened to us.

Here, Jesus is telling us that we need to be sad over our sin and failure in our relationship to God. These are the people who are blessed. When we are sad over our sin and repent (turn from sin) we experience not God’s condemnation, but His comfort.

***Stop here and ask your child if he or she has ever felt bad over something they have done. Ask them why they felt bad. The goal is to direct the child’s heart to grieve over the fact that they have sinned against God, not that they have “gotten caught” or “disappointed mommy or daddy.”***

**Discipleship Principle: If we want to experience growth as a Christian, we must be sad over our sin. When we repent, God comforts us, not condemns us.**

*3. Spiritually Humble.* “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (5:5).

Meek does not mean weak! Nor does it mean mild. Picture a horse. I am sure the horse you are imagining right now is the kind with a saddle on it that you can ride through the open fields, as it obeys your every command. The type of horse you are imagining is called a *broken* horse, meaning that it has been trained so that you can ride it. Do you know what that horse looked like before it was broken? It was wild! It would buck and kick, that is, until, through training, it got its power under control.

***Parents, take a moment and go through some scenarios with your child in which he or she is forced to make a decision that will either further themselves or someone else.***

This is the idea of meekness. It is power under control. It is not a wimpy quality, but a quality that does not demand its own way. The world tells us that we should look out for ourselves, but God tells us to deny our rights and put His concerns and the concerns of others ahead of ours.

**Discipleship Principle: Meekness is not weakness; it is denying your rights and wants for God and others.**

*4. Spiritual Desire.* “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (5:6).

***A great thing to explain here is idolatry. Idolatry is loving or desiring anything more than God. Help your child identify some possible idols and then direct them to see how this action is sinful (see Romans 1:20-23).***

Have you ever been really hungry or really thirsty? What did you do? You probably ate and drank until you had enough; until you were satisfied. I am also sure you hunted down something to eat and drink as fast as you could!

This is how greatly we should pursue God. The word “righteousness” simple means a right relationship with God. As Jesus’ disciples, we are to have a deep craving for God. This means that our desire to know God should be more than any other desire we have. We should desire God more than happiness and yes, even more than food!

**Spiritual Principle: True satisfaction is not found in “things”, but in a right relationship with God.**

**The Disciples Heart, part 2**

**Week 2**

This week, you will continue to take your child through the beatitudes of Matthew 5.

*1. Spirit of Mercy.* “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.” (5:7).

What is mercy? Mercy is the act of showing kindness or goodness to people whether they deserve it or not. When we show mercy, we do so not because the person deserves it, but because God delights in it.

***Parents, it is very important that you emphasize that mercy goes beyond feeling, to action. Take a few moments to ask your child what he/she would do in certain situations where someone is in need.***

Have you ever felt sorry for someone who was hurting or who had a bad day? What did you do for them? Mercy is more than just feeling sorry for someone. Mercy moves us to act. When we see someone who is hurting or in need, mercy acts to comfort or meet the need.

How have you treated someone who has sinned or done something bad? Did you try to help them, or just tell them how wrong they were? Mercy never approves of sin, but it does encourage the one who has sinned to get up and keep seeking God.

Have you ever had a bad day? Have you ever been sad? Did someone do something for you that helped you out or cheered you up? If they did, you were shown mercy. Jesus says that those who show mercy will also receive mercy when they need it.

**Discipleship Principle: True mercy moves us to actions, and those who show it will receive it.**

*2. Pure Heart.* “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (5:8).

Think of a mud puddle. Do you have any of those around your house or your school? Can you see what is at the bottom of that puddle? Why? That’s right, you can’t, because the water is muddy, it is not clear. However, you can see the bottom of a swimming pool right? Why? Because the water is clear.

***A good thing to emphasize here is the motive of your child’s action. We do not want children who obey with hypocrisy in their hearts, but with genuine love for God, us, and the gospel.***

This is similar to what Jesus has in mind here. A pure heart is a clean and clear heart. A pure heart is a heart that is sincere, honest, and fears the Lord.

What does it mean to “see God?” Jesus is not talking about seeing God with your physical eyes, but with the eyes of your heart. Seeing God means knowing Him and having a great relationship with Him; it means knowing His will and what He wants for your life. Think of the mud puddle again. Just as you can’t see the bottom of it because the water is not clear, if we have unconfessed sin in our hearts, bad attitudes, or evil motives, we will not be able to know God.

On the other hand, if we confess our sin and our sincere in our relationship with God, we will get to know Him more.

**Discipleship Principle: A clean heart brings a clear vision of God.**

*3. Peacemakers.* “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (5:9).

***Parents, take the time to make sure your child understands the concept of reconciliation. Use examples where your child has been in disagreement with you, a sibling, or a friend, and show them how to be a peacemaker rather than a peace-lover or peacekeeper in that situation.***

Peace-lover: a person who does not like any disharmony and will avoid conflict at all cost.

Peacekeeper: a person who will avoid pointing out truth or difficult problems because they don’t want to upset anyone.

Peacemaker: a reconciler.

What does the word reconcile mean? It means to restore peace where it has been lost or broken. Jesus does not call us to be peace-lovers or peacekeepers, but peacemakers. A peacemaker is someone who can enter a relationship or situation and bring peace and restoration where is has been broken.

Jesus himself is the ultimate peacemaker. We were enemies of God, and Jesus came down and made peace by the blood of his cross. Through his death, he reconciled us to God.

**Discipleship Principle: Peacemakers are reconcilers. They seek to restore peace where it has been lost.**

*4. Loyal in Persecution.* “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (5:10-12).

Has anyone ever made fun of you or picked on you before? How did it make you feel? It hurts our feelings when someone makes fun of the way we look or the way we dress. However, there is a type of persecution that Jesus says is good. It is being made fun of or treated badly for being a disciple of Jesus.

As a disciple, you will have to suffer for it. The world hates Jesus because they hate the truth. Because you follow Jesus, some people will not like you for it. They will make fun of you and do mean things to you.

***Two things to emphasize here: 1. Help your child understand that it is more important what Jesus thinks about us than our friends, etc. 2. Help them understand that our goal in life is not to be accepted by everyone, but to be faithful to our Savior,***

Jesus says not to be discouraged by it. Rather, he says you are blessed. He says that you will have a great reward in heaven.

**Discipleship Principle: What was done to Jesus will be done to you, so stay loyal to Jesus.**

**The Cost of Being a Disciple**

**Week 3**

Being a disciple is not easy. In fact, Jesus tells us that before we decide to become his disciples, we should sit down and think about how hard it is going to be and whether or not we really want to follow.

This week, we will be studying Luke 14:25-33, along with other places in the Bible that talk about the cost of being a disciple. The passage in Luke opens with Jesus being surrounded by a great crowd. What if you were a great teacher and you were surrounded by hundreds of people wanting to hear from you? What would you do? Would you say things to encourage them to stay? Would you do what you could to draw more people?

Jesus did not do this. Instead of saying things that would keep a crowd, he said some things that would cause people to run and stop following him! This is because Jesus cares more about what kind of people follow him rather than the number of people that follow him. Think about it: Would you rather have two hundred broken toys that didn’t work, or one toy that was really awesome and worked all the time? Jesus wanted disciples who were genuine, so he said some hard things to get rid of those who were following him for the wrong reason. Jesus’ call is not just to believe him, but to believe him and obey him. His call was one of discipleship. Let’s look at the three things he told the crowd.

*1. Love Jesus the Most.* “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26).

***Parents, share with your child how loving Jesus the most actually makes your love for your family and friends better. Read Romans 5:5 and 1 John 4:7-8.***

Whoa, wait a minute, did Jesus just actually tell us to hate those closest to us? Not at all. Here, the word “hate” means “to love less”. Jesus is saying that your love for me must be greater than your love for all these other people. In fact, your love for me needs to be so great, that it makes your love for others look like “hate”.

Loving Jesus the most does not mean that we won’t love our family and friends. All it means is that he must have first place in our heart and life. Jesus also says that you must love him more than you do yourself (your own life). In other words, you can’t live for yourself anymore. You can’t put yourself first, or think about getting your way all the time. Jesus comes first, and his desires and his will becomes top priority.

**Discipleship Principle: I must love Jesus more than my family,**

**friends, and myself.**

*2. Reject the World.* “Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple” (v. 27).

***Parents, take a moment and explain what “worldliness” is to your child and what it means to reject the “world” (see Parent’s Notes for help).***

This sounds a little weird if we don’t understand what this meant during the days of Jesus. To the people of Jesus’ day, the cross was a symbol of suffering and death. So, if Jesus doesn’t mean that we have to take up a real piece of wood and walk with it, what does he mean?

Going to die on the cross was something that Jesus did willingly. It meant sacrifice and suffering. It meant him denying himself, the opinions of others, and the world as a whole. For the disciple, taking up our cross means that we are willing to accept being rejected and unpopular for Jesus. It means that we reject the world and all it stands for.

**Discipleship Principle: I must be willing to suffer for Jesus.**

*3. Let go of Everything.* “So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple” (v. 33).

***Since children can become so attached to things like a favorite toy, this is a difficult principle for them to grasp at times. Parents, continue to help your child understand the difference between an owner and a steward.***

Here is something to think about: Do you realize that everything you have is really God’s? Yep, he owns it all. God has *entrusted* us with his possessions. This means that we don’t own his things, rather, we are to be good stewards of it.

Here, Jesus is saying that if we are going to be his disciple, he has the right to do with our possessions as he wants. We need to be thankful that God has loaned us his possessions to use and take care of. Our attitude doesn’t need to be “how much of my possessions will I give to God?”, but “how much of God’s possessions will I keep for myself?”

**Discipleship Principle: God has a right to do whatever he wants with his possessions.**

**The Real Deal**

**Week 4**

When I was a kid, I used to love to play with fake money. I remember imagining what it would be like if all the fake money I had was real. I thought about all the toys and games I would buy, all the people I could help, and all the fun things I could do. However, at the end of the day, the money I had was actually worthless, because it wasn’t real; it had no value.

Just as there are real money and fake money, there are also real disciples and fake disciples. What you will learn this week is that there are three things that define a real disciple- reading and obeying God’s word, loving others, and bearing spiritual fruit. If a person doesn’t have these three things in their life, it doesn’t matter what they say, they are not true disciples.

*1. Reading and Obeying God’s Word.* “So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32).

***Two things to emphasizes here to your child: 1) Reading and meditating on God’s word everyday is important. It takes discipline. 2) You must believe what you read. For the Bible to profit us spiritually, our hearing must be mixed with faith.***

Do you have a favorite place that you like to go and stay? Maybe it’s a room, or a friend’s house, or a certain place you love to go for vacation. Whatever it is, when you get to that special place, you feel as if you never want to leave. You want to *abide* there or *remain* there.

This is the idea that Jesus is talking about when he uses the word *abide*. It means to “remain, continue, or stay.” Jesus is telling us that if we are truly his disciples, we will “continue” or “stay” in his word, or his teachings. Just like your favorite place, when we learn the teachings of Jesus, we want to stay in them by hiding them in our heart and living them out. If we do this, we show that we are truly Jesus’ disciples.

**Discipleship Principle: Abiding in the Word is proof that our discipleship is real.**

*2. Love Others.* “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

What do you think of when you hear the word *love*? Love is deeper than a feeling or a thought, or even an action. Love is *incarnational*. That is a big word, so let me explain what it means. The *incarnation* is a word we as disciples use to describe how God became a man in Jesus. It gives the idea that God came down as a man in Jesus to be with us, teach us, and save us. John 1:14 says “And the Word (the Son) became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as the only begotten Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

***Parents, please take the necessary time to explain to your children about the incarnation. It is essential to them understanding the true nature of love. Emphasize to them that when we enter into situations or relationships with friends, we should seek not what we want, but how we can best serve others and show Jesus (see Parent’s Notes to read about three ways Jesus showed love).***

John 3:16 tells us one of the reasons for the incarnation, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that all the believing ones in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

From these two verses, we see that love is *incarnational*. It comes to those in need, denying itself, and shows the glory of God. What does this mean for you? It simply means this: To love others is to show them Jesus by being patient and kind when they don’t deserve it. It means when they are being ugly and rude, you come to them with mercy. It means that you don’t brag about how great you are, but look at how you can help others be great. It means that you don’t seek what you want. It means that you rejoice in the truth, and that you endure with people even when they are hateful.

Incarnational love is entering into people’s lives and showing them Jesus in all situations.

**Discipleship Principle: The true mark of discipleship is incarnational love.**

*3. Bear Fruit.* “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples” (John 15:7-8).

***Read Galatians 5:22-23 with your child. Strongly emphasize that it is the Spirit’s work to produce the fruit in us; it is his fruit. Thus, bearing fruit is a sign of the Spirit in the life of a disciple.***

If an apple tree doesn’t bear apples, something is wrong, right? The same is true with an orange tree, pear tree, or any type of plant that is supposed to bear fruit. If the plant is not bearing fruit, it means that the tree is either diseased, or not getting enough nutrients, water, and sunlight.

The same is true of disciples. If someone claims to be a disciple of Christ, but they have no spiritual fruit in their life, it means that either they have stopped abiding in Christ, or they are not really his disciple.

We have already looked at what it means to abide in God’s Word, but what does it mean to abide in Christ? Simply put, it means to stop living for yourself and start walking with and obey Christ. It means to think his thoughts, obey his commands, and do his will. It means to be so focused on him, that you lose sight of yourself. When we do this, along with letting God’s Word live in our heart, we will bear spiritual fruit.

**Discipleship Principle: Bearing spiritual fruit shows that our relationship with Jesus is real.**

**Jesus is Lord**

**Week 5**

Knowing something *about* a person and *knowing* a person are two different things. You may know all about your favorite movie star, superhero, or football player, but not really know them personally. The same with salvation; a person can know all sorts of things about Jesus and the Bible, but not actually *know* Jesus. This is because salvation is not just knowing facts, it is embracing a person- Jesus Christ- as Lord. If we claim Jesus as Savior, that also means we claim him as Lord. As our Lord, that means he has full control over our lives. Jesus did not just call people to believe in him, but to be his disciples. A disciple is a person who *learns* so that he or she can *obey*. This week, we will look at three things that make up Christ’s Lordship over our lives.

***Take your child through these verses (John 5:19; 8:28, 38; John 12:49-50) and point out how Jesus only did and spoke what the Father commanded. We are to imitate this same attitude.***

*1. He has the Authority.*  “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy” (1 Peter 3:15a).

What comes to mind when you hear the word *authority*? A police officer? The president? A king? Your parents? The word *authority* simply means the power or right to command and determine something. For example, when someone has authority, like a police officer, they have the right to command you to uphold the law, and to enforce discipline when you don’t. A king has the power to determine the right course of action for his country.

For Christ to have the authority over our lives, it means that we obey his commands and let him determine what is best for us. It means that his will govern and directs our lives, and that we don’t seek to live our lives outside of what he wants for us.

**Discipleship Principle: As a disciple, God’s will is what rules my life.**

*2. He Owns Us.* “You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

***See Parent’s Notes section for ideas on how to relay this concept to your children.***

What does it mean for God to *own* us? Think of it this way: When you buy something, it cost money, right? In other words, you have to pay for it. When you pay for it, and take it home from the store, it is yours- you own it. This is similar to what God did. Through Jesus, he *paid the price* for our sin. We were dead in our sin and deserved God’s wrath. Jesus paid the penalty for our sin when he died on the cross. Thus, God bought us back from sin. This is what the word *redemption* means. God now owns us inside and out because he paid to free us from sin by the blood of his Son. We are now his. Sin does not own us, and we do not own ourselves.

This means that we can no longer be boss over our lives. We have not been given our lives to do what we want, say what we want, and live how we want. As a disciple, God owns us. We are his property, so we do what he wants, say what he wants us to say, and live how he wants us to live.

**Discipleship Principle: Jesus owns me inside and out.**

*3. Obedience.* “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?” (Luke 6:46).

***See Matthew 7:15-20 and emphasize the principle of fruit bearing.***

Can you tell the difference between fake money and real money? Sometimes it’s pretty easy, but other times, depending on how much the fake money looks like the real, it can be difficult. As we have talked about before, just as there is real and fake money, there are also true and false disciples.

What’s the difference? Well, to start, a false disciple will say that Jesus is Lord, but will have no desire to obey or do his will. They hear the words of Jesus, but have no intention of obeying him. False disciples go to church, serve in ministries, and even sing the worship songs. However, what makes them false is that though they look like Christians on the outside, their heart is dead, and they have no desire for Christ. They come to church only for themselves.

A true disciple loves God, and seeks to obey from the heart. We love God as an act of worship because of how much he loves us. If God has changed our heart, then we are filled with love for him, and his Lordship over our lives is not something we resists, but welcome.

**Discipleship Principle: The true mark of discipleship is obedience from the heart.**

**The Holy Spirit part 1**

**Week 6**

One of the hardest things to understand about God is that he is three persons existing as one God. Huh? Exactly. It is a great mystery, but one that the Bible teaches. God is presented as three persons who exist as one God, at the same time. These three persons are the Father, Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit. It is easy for us to imagine what God the Father and God the Son are like because we are familiar with what a father is and what a son is. But a spirit? How are we to imagine this? Over the next two weeks, we will be looking at who the Holy Spirit is and what he does.

***See Parent’s Notes on the Trinity.***

*1. What is he like?* “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you” (John 14:15-17).

Let’s talk about the word *another* in this passage. Let’s say you are at the state fair, and you just got finished riding an awesome ride. You then ask your parents, “Can I go on another one?” What you mean is that you want to ride another ride, but one that is different than the one you just rode. This is one use of the word- another of a different kind.

Now, let’s say you are eating pancakes for breakfast. You finish the ones on your plate, then you ask your mom, “May I have another?” What you mean is another pancake; one just like the others. This is the second use of the word- another of the same kind.

When Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit, he is using the word *another* just like you would when asking for another pancake- another of the same kind. So, when Jesus says that he is going to send us “another Helper,” he is saying that he is going to send someone who is the same as he is. The Holy Spirit is just like Jesus.

**Discipleship Principle: The Holy Spirit is just like Jesus in the way he loves, cares, and helps us.**

*2. What does he do?* “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you” (John 16:13-14).

We can understand the Father is the one who plans all things, and that the Son is the one who accomplishes the Father’s plan of creation and salvation, but what about the Holy Spirit? What does he do?

***Parents, a great illustration to use is that of a map or compass. Just as we need a map to guide us to where we are going, or a compass to keep us heading in the right direction, the Holy Spirit leads and guides us in God’s ways.***

He does a lot of things, but here, we only want to talk about three of those things. First, we see that he guides us into all truth. The world is full of lies and things that can lead us down the wrong path. We also have to deal with the devil trying to deceive us and lie to us. The Holy Spirit reveals to our hearts and minds the truth of God’s word so that we don’t believe the lie.

Second, he glorifies Jesus. To “glorify” means that he honors Jesus and makes a big deal out of him. The Holy Spirit’s desire, and what he works for, is glorifying Jesus in the church, and in the world, by leading people to Christ and expanding the kingdom of God.

Finally, according to our scripture from the last section, he is our Helper. We cannot live the Christian life by ourselves and in our own strength. The Holy Spirit has been sent to help us live for God; more on this next week.

**Discipleship Principle: The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ in the life of the disciple**

**The Holy Spirit part 2**

**Week 7**

Once we become Jesus’ disciples, we are not left on our own to try and live for God in our own power. When God saves us, he places his Holy Spirit inside of us in order to enable us to live a life pleasing to him. Paul refers to this indwelling of the Holy Spirit as being “sealed with the Spirit” (Eph. 1:13). All this means is that God has marked you out as his. The Holy Spirit is God’s stamp of approval that you are his child. This week, we will look at three things that relate to the Holy Spirit and the Christian life.

*1. He gives us power to witness and minister for Jesus.* “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

***Using a real flashlight and batteries may help to bring this truth to “light” for your child.***

Witnessing for Jesus can be a scary thing. However, it is also a *spiritual* thing. This means that we cannot do it in our own power or in our own strength. In other words, we cannot be the witnesses we need to be without the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit’s power gives us the ability to serve God in a way that is useful to his kingdom.

For example, you can use a flash light without batteries all you want, but it will never help you see in the dark. In order for it to accomplish its purpose, it has to have the batteries to produce the light. The same with us; we can witness and serve all we want, but without the Holy Spirit’s power, we will not produce anything for God.

**Discipleship Principle: The Holy Spirit gives us power to be Christ’s witnesses.**

*2. We are to be filled with the Spirit.* “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

Usually, when we think of “filling” something, we think along the lines of filling a bath tub with water, or filling a glass with milk. Unfortunately, this is how many people have viewed being filled with the Holy Spirit. They think that we are empty containers who need more and more of the Holy Spirit because he “leaks” out of us. This is not the case.

Rather, think of it this way: Have you ever been so excited that you couldn’t contain yourself? You were full of happiness or overcome with joy. This is a similar to what being filled with the Holy Spirit is like. It is more along the lines of being controlled and guided by Him. We don’t need more of him, we already have all of him living in us! What we do need is to be controlled by him and guided by him. This is what it means to be filled with the Spirit. Finally, this is something that is to happen all the time. The verse literally means “keep on being filled” with the Spirit.

So, how are you filled with the Spirit? Simple, we bring all of our life under his control. We willfully surrender to him every day and let him guide and control our lives.

**Discipleship Principle: As Jesus’ disciple, we are to always be filled with the Holy Spirit.**

*3. He is our Helper.* “And I will give you another Helper…”(John 14:16).

We all need help from time to time. I am sure you have asked your mom or dad to help you with homework, lifting something, or making an important decision. Just like your parents are there to help you, the Holy Spirit is there in the life of a disciple to help. As disciples, Jesus did not leave us alone to live out the Christian life by ourselves. In fact, that is impossible. So impossible is it that Jesus sent his representative, the Holy Spirit, to live with us and in us forever, so that we will always have his help.

So, how does he help us?

***See Parent’s Notes about what it means to pray “in the Spirit.”***

1) Bible study- the Holy Spirit is the one who inspired men to write the Bible. Therefore he is the one, as we read and study, who teaches us the meaning of the Bible.

2) Prayer- the Holy Spirit is the spirit of prayer (Zech. 12:10). We are told to pray “in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18), and that the Spirit helps us when we don’t know how to pray (Rm. 8:26).

3) Making us like Jesus- The Holy Spirit works in us to make us like Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). He is the one who gives us new life and the power to overcome sin (Rm. 8:13).

**Discipleship Principle: I cannot live as a disciple without the Holy Spirit.**

**Growing as a Disciple**

**Week 8**

One day, you are going to be all grown up. If you are like some children, you want to hurry up and get there! Well, let me tell you, being an adult is not as great as you may think. However, being a mature disciple is awesome, and it is something to strive for. Just like we grow physically from a child to an adult, we are also to grow spiritually. The bible calls this becoming spiritually mature. Becoming spiritually mature means growing more and more to be like Jesus. This week we will focus on how to become mature disciples.

*1. Remember Christ is Lord.*  One of the first steps to growing as a disciple is to remember that Jesus has the final word in any decision. He is the one who guides us and leads us. We must continue to look to Jesus all of our lives, and as we do, we will be made more and more like him.

In looking at Jesus, we will realize that we need to change some of our habits. What is a habit? It is something that you do over and over again, a lot of times, without even thinking about it. For example, a good habit is brushing your teeth every morning and every night. A bad habit is picking your nose. Yuck!

Did you know we can have good and bad habits when it comes to our relationship with God? If Jesus is our Lord, we have to change some of our bad habits. Maybe it is yelling back when someone yells at you. Maybe it is being mean to people who are different than you. Now, as a disciple, Jesus wants you to develop habits of thinking and acting that are in line with his word.

**Discipleship Principle: Since Jesus is Lord, I must let him guide my life and change my habits.**

***Help your child think of a time when you made them do something that seemed difficult at the time, but was for their own good.***

*2. Learn to Love God’s Discipline.* “For they [earthly fathers] disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he [God] disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.” (Heb. 12:10).

Discipline is not a bad thing. It means to teach or to train. Your parents teach and train you to do the right thing, and when you mess up, they have to correct you. God is the same way. He teaches us and trains us to be more like Christ, and he corrects us when we go astray. How does he teach us? One way is that he may put us in situations that are hard in order to help train us how to handle them. God uses the things in life to make us more like Christ. Though God’s discipline may be hard, remember, it is not a sign of his anger, but his love.

**Discipleship Principle: God disciplines us for our good, not our harm.**

*3. Learn to Overcome Temptation.* “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” (1 Cor. 10:13).

Have you ever felt the urge to do something that you know is wrong? That is temptation. It is being enticed to do something that you know is sin. The Bible mentions two types of temptations. One is good and the other is bad. One is the work of God and one is the work of Satan.

***See Parent’s Notes for a more detail explanation for temptation, so that you can explain this concept to your child.***

The good type of temptation that the Bible mentions as being from God means *to test*. In *testing*, God is disciplining us to make us stronger and separate all the bad qualities from us.

The bad type of temptation is done by Satan, and it means *to tempt*. In this type of temptation, Satan is poking at us in order to find a weak spot so that he can lead us into sin. God never does this type of tempting (James 1:13).

The 1 Corinthians 10:13 verse refers to this second type of temptation. When we are tempted by our own desires or by the devil to sin, God helps us. God will help us find a way to stand up under the temptation and resist it. If we let Him, God can use the devil’s temptation for good. By saying “yes” to God and “no” to sin, God uses this process to make us more and more like Jesus.

**Discipleship Principle: God is with us in temptation and will always provide a way for us to endure it.**

**Learning How to Pray**

**Week 9**

One of the most important things for you to learn as Jesus’ disciple is how to pray. Sometimes, we may not know how to pray or what to pray for, which is why Jesus gives us a model of how to pray in the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus gives his disciples a model prayer. This prayer has come to be known as the *Lord’s Prayer*.

***Take a few moments with your child and point out some things about God’s character and works that they can praise him for.***

Sometimes, people treat this prayer as something to be repeated. This was not Jesus intention. Jesus did not say “pray this prayer,” rather, he said “pray like this’ or “in this way.” This means that the prayer is given to us as a guide to learn how to pray. This week, we will be looking at the Lord’s Prayer and how it serves as a guide for us when we are learning how to pray. The prayer can be divided into six requests: To the Father- his name, kingdom, and will. Human- needs, forgiveness, and victory over Satan.

*1. His Name.* “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.” (6:9).

I know what you are thinking, “What does hallowed mean?” Though it is a funny sounding word, it is very important. To hallow God’s name means to hold it in respect and reverence. In other words, it means to hold him in reverence. It means to honor, glorify, praise, and exalt God. Therefore, when we pray, the first thing we need to do is come into God’s presence with praise and thanksgiving. We praise him and thank him for who he is and what he has done.

***Ask your child if they know anyone who needs to become a disciple of Christ. Start to pray for that person, that the kingdom of God would come in their life and that they will believe the gospel.***

*2. His Kingdom.*  “Your kingdom come” (6:10a).

The “kingdom’ here refers to the rule of God in a person’s heart. Only through the gospel does God change people’s heart, and only through the gospel will people live out the value and truth of God’s kingdom. Therefore, this portion of the Lord’s Prayer encourages us to pray that God’s rule would be established in the heart of people. It is a time to pray for the spread of the gospel and that people would be brought into God’s kingdom.

***Help your child identify areas in their life where they need to pray that they would become more obedient to what God ask of them. Also have your child pray for you, or a sibling, in a certain area where there needs to be more conformity to the will of God.***

*3. His Will.*  “your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” (6:10b).

The will of God that is being talked about here is what is called his “revealed” will, or those things which are commanded in scripture. It is this will which is done perfectly in heaven, but has a long way to go here on earth. Therefore, we should pray that just as God is being obeyed perfectly in heaven, so may it be on earth. We should pray this for ourselves, and for others, that what God has shown us, we would practice it more and more every day.

*4. Your Needs..* “Give us this day our daily bread,” (6:11).

Here, Jesus teaches us to ask God to provide for our daily needs. God loves us and is going to take care of our day to day needs. We must remember something very important here: we are taught to ask for our *needs*, not our *wants*. God promises to take care of and meet our needs, not our wants. So, this means that God is not obligated to give you an ipod, Xbox, or anything else that you don’t *need.* This is not to say that he won’t bless you with one, but that is exactly what it will be- an extra blessing. The focus of this prayer is to trust that God will provide all that we need on a day to day basis.

***Help your child identify needs in your family, as well as other families, that you can pray for God to meet***.

*5. Forgiveness.* “and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” (6:12).

At this point in the prayer, Jesus teaches that we need to ask for forgiveness of our sins, along with forgiving others who have sinned against us. The word “debt” gives the idea of something that we owe and that we must be punished for unless a payment is made. What this means is that we need God to meet the payment for our sin. Thankfully, he has done that in Jesus! Therefore, when we ask for forgiveness of our sins, we are asking God to cleanse us from the pollution that it brings and the discord is causes in our relationship to God and others.

*6. Victory.* “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” (6:13).

Temptation is all around us, and given that we are weak and prone to sin, we are taught to pray here that God would help keep us from running headlong into temptation. The Bible is clear that God does not tempt anyone to sin; that is what Satan does. He pokes and probes at us to try and lure us away from Christ. Therefore, we should pray that God would help us and guard us.

**Discipleship Principle: As a disciple, I must learn how to pray.**

**Parent’s Notes**

**Week 1: The Disciples Heart, part 1**

Poor in spirit: The idea that Jesus is getting at here is one of inadequacy. In the Greek language, there are two words for poor. One refers to someone who has nothing ornate or extravagant; the other refers to someone who has nothing at all. It is this second meaning that Jesus uses. So, the basic idea is one of spiritual bankruptcy.

Given that the idea of bankruptcy can be complicated for a child to grasp, it is probably best to approach your child with the idea of being needy. Take some time and think of some examples to get this point across to your child. Remember, the basic idea here is that the person who is blessed is the one who recognizes their spiritual bankruptcy (neediness), throws themselves back on God, and then abounds in His eternal resources.

Mourn: This beatitude is the byproduct of being poor in spirit. The idea behind this word is not bereavement, although it is definitely not excluded. Rather, the word “mourn” gives the idea of the deepest kind of grief imaginable. It is mourning over sin and failure; mourning over the slowness of our growth into the image of Christ. Without sorrow in life or sorrow over sin, we cannot grow as disciples.

If you are discipling a younger child, it might be hard for them to grasp this idea of mourning over the slowness of spiritual growth. Therefore, it is best to focus on mourning over sin. However, if you have an older child, you might want to emphasize this concept and talk about how we as disciples should yearn with all our hearts to grow more and more into Christ’s image, and it should grieve us as to how slow we are to understand and obey.

Meekness: Over the years, the evangelical church has done a disservice to not only our people, but our children, by presenting “gentle Jesus, meek and mild” in a picture where our Savior has big blue puppy dog eyes and pets a lamb. This causes us to associate meekness with weakness. This was not Jesus, and this is not what meekness means. The word means “power under control”. It was used of a horse that had been broken and domesticated, thus giving the idea of power that is controlled and directed.

In our relationship to God it means that we accept His will as good, without arguing or resisting Him. It means that we recognize that God owns us and we have no right to do what we want. That is the key concept that we want to relate to our children. Children are so inherently selfish, that we as parents are often aghast at times. As Christian parents, we need to meet this attitude head on. We need to instill in our children that through Christ, they are now God’s. They can no longer live for what they want, but for what God wants. This is the essence of meekness.

**Week 2: The Disciple’s Heart, part 2**

Mercy: As you well know, the world is full of mean and selfish people. As disciples, we want our children to go against the grain of this awful attitude. Mercy softens hearts, mends relationships, and has a domino effect of kindness. Human nature is geared towards criticism. So we want our children to view people and their sin and problems not through a judgmental eye, but through the eyes of mercy. We want our children to be incarnational- to be able to enter into a person’s life, not to condone or condemn their sin and problems, but to walk with them through it. That is why it is so important to emphasize that mercy is more than a feeling, but empathy that results in action.

Pure in heart: One of the greatest disservices we can do to our children is to unknowingly make them hypocrites. This verse is not just meant to focus on having a heart free from sin and evil desires, but to also focus on the *sincerity* of actions. Here is one of the most important things that I will relay in these notes, and as parents, we have to keep it in the forefront all the time: We are to disciple our children’s heart, not just their actions. So many parents get caught up in trying to get their children to conform to a standard that they have set for them. It becomes all about the rules and how the child conforms to them. Teaching rules will never penetrate the heart of a child.

If we teach our children to be rule followers, we have done nothing more than make sinners who are good at following a standard. I hope it is obvious that I am not saying that you shouldn’t hold your children accountable and that there is not standard of right and wrong. What I am warning against is making hypocrites. As parents, we have to speak to the child’s heart, not the actions. Obedience can be faked. Obedience that is not from the heart is no obedience at all.

Persecuted for Righteousness: We must prepare our children at an early age for rejection. Too often, parents fall into the trap of wanting their children to be popular and have lots of friends. Many times, this relays to the child that acceptance is the most sought after virtue in life. As disciples, we need to teach our children that faithfulness to Christ, rather than the acceptance of others, is the highest aim of life. When we do our best to prepare our children at a young age for persecution, it guards them from disillusionment and helps them to develop a kingdom mindset early on. It also helps them to realize that life is not about their comfort, but about doing the will of God.

**Week 3: The Cost of Being a Disciple**

Hate: Jesus is using what is called “exaggerated contrast.” It is a literary devise used in order to show how supreme the love of Christ should be in the life of a disciple. When children hear the word “hate”, they often view it in a negative way. Help your child understand what Jesus is doing in this verse. Help them see that Jesus wants their love for him to be unrivaled. He must have the supreme place in their life and affections.

Parents, this may also be a good time to evaluate and change how you encourage your child’s obedience. Many times, as parents, we are so emphatic on telling our children to obey *us* that we eclipse the authority of God. If we are not careful, we will set ourselves up as the ultimate authority. We want our children to obey us because this is what God wants for them. This is how they, as children, can bring glory to God. When your child disobeys you, don’t focus so much on yourself, but on how your child has missed out on an opportunity to glorify God in their life by obeying what you asked of them. Help them to see that they have sinned against God first, and you second. As we do this, we are consistently showing our children that obedience to their parents is a much larger picture; it is one that is rooted in God and his glory.

Worldliness: What does it mean to be “worldly” or “to love the world?” Unfortunately, because of the rise of modern Fundamentalism, this concept has been conflated into external legalism. Usually, when someone speaks of worldliness, it ends up like this: Don’t dress like the world, wear your hair like the world, or watch the same movies as the world. Don’t go where they go, eat what they eat, or drink what they drink. Thus, abstaining from the world is cutting off certain external things.

The sad thing is that many of these activities can be morally neutral. It is not the externals that the bible speaks of, but the mindset, philosophies, and heart. When scripture speaks of “worldliness” and “loving the world” it is warning against a heart and mindset that is fascinated by the philosophies and pursuits of the world. It is buying into what the world says about life, God, and purpose. It is pursuing the ideals of the world such as selfishness, pleasure, and happiness. It is justifying sin and making morality relative. It is being fascinated and led astray by the spirit of the age.

This is what the disciple is to die to. This is what the disciple is to reject. The disciple is not to seek conformity or approval from those who hold to these philosophies and pursue these ends. Therefore, when we teach our children, we must focus on the mind and the heart. We must warn them of making idols out of their pleasures and teach them to discern truth from error. We must show them the emptiness of the world’s philosophies and the vanity of their pursuits. We must help them see that the devil is not in the clothes or the movie theater or the food and drink. Rather, it is the heart and mind that must be rooted in Christ so that it will be guarded against deception and idolatry. We must help them see that because the world is passing away, it is foolish to seek its approval.

Let Go of Everything: One of the most difficult thing for a younger child to grasp is the concept that their things are not really theirs, but God’s. This is something that is not going to happen overnight. It takes constant reminders and consistent teaching. This is where the parent’s example can play a crucial role. Does your child understand why you give money to the church? If not, explain. Do you explain to your child why it’s important to clean the house? Do you pray about large purchases or how you can use your home and things for the glory of God? All of these things will model the attitude of stewardship to your children. With constant prayer, teaching, and living by example, this principle will start to take hold in your child’s life.

**Week 4: The Real Deal**

Incarnational Love: Love that is divorced from the cross of Christ is at best, nothing more than moralism, and at worst, a fleeting sentiment. Love can be one of the most misunderstood virtues of Christianity. We have stripped this term of its biblical potency by defining it either by how we react (or don’t react) in a situation, or by a mere action that is kind. When we say, “I spoke to them in love,” what we really mean is that “I was nice and didn’t bite their head off.” That is not love; that is just being nice and courteous. Incarnational love, biblical love, is getting outside of yourself and engaging your heart in the other person’s pain or plight. When we are mistreated, we respond with servant hood; that same type of servant hood that Jesus showed when he washed Judas’ feet, knowing that he would betray him. It is responding with grief over the other person’s depravity and ignorance, just as Jesus did when he cried “Father, forgive them, they don’t know what they are doing.”

Incarnational love is selfless and active. It is a frail imitation of the love of God described in John 3:16. It is a bold sacrifice of ourselves so that the glory of God might be shown to others through our mortal bodies. It is entering into people’s frustration and being patience. It is absorbing others meanness without being rude. It is rejoicing in others success without being envious. It is coming along side a person and enduring all so that their hearts may be conquered by the love of Christ. This is the type of love we want to model for and teach our children.

One thing that might be helpful for teaching this to your children is focusing on how Jesus expressed his love. He did this by:

1) Being selfless. There was no self interest in his love. He did not consider himself or think of himself. He thought solely about the glory of God.

2) Being forgiving. Jesus forgave Peter for denying him. He even extended it to those who mocked him on the cross.

3) Being sacrificial. Jesus sacrificed his time by preaching, teaching, and discipling. He sacrificed his life by laying it down for the atonement of sin.

Abiding in Christ: This is similar to the Old Testament concept of walking with God. In John 15:7, the Greek language gives us a beautiful word picture when it speaks of abiding in Christ and letting his word abide in us. Not to get too technical, but the phrase “in him” and “in us” is what is called a dative of sphere. What this means is that the “him” and the “us” is speaking of a sphere or a realm. The two realms are “him” and “us”. This diagram illustrates the thought:

**Diagram 1**

**The two circles represent two different realms of existence.**

To abide in Christ means that I need to get outside of my realm, and into his. It means that I begin to live my life under his Lordship. It means that I become more conscious of him, and less conscious of myself. As we grow in our relationship with Christ, we begin to get caught up in his reality more and more, so that the circles start to look like this:

**Diagram 2**

As we deny ourselves and lift our hearts and minds upward, and begin to focus on the Son of God, we get more and more outside of ourselves, and more and more into Christ. Abiding in him means that I learn to live the totality of my life in the realm of Christ. Part of discipleship is learning how to stay in stride with God and live in this abiding. As disciples, we are continually learning how to live in this place. Life, sin, and Satan so often pull us out of our abiding place. Yet true abiding happens when, in spite of what comes at us, we remain in stride with God and abide in Christ.

Kids learn great with pictures and object lessons. One way to illustrate this with your kids is to use the circles, put replace them with a picture of Jesus and themselves. You could even have them draw this, making their own picture of Jesus and of themselves. In diagram 2, you can have one circle, and on the inside, have your child draw a picture of Jesus holding their hand.

**Week 5: Jesus is Lord**

Christ Owns Us: Sometimes the idea of Christ owning us can be difficult for a child to grasp. They can understand owning a toy, a home, or a certain object, because these things are mere objects, and because they have either used their own money to buy a toy, or have seen you do it. However, because children do not view themselves as objects that can be bought in a store, the concept takes some explaining. As a matter of fact, the best way to explain this concept is to use what they are familiar with- buying a toy.

Tell your child that you are going to play a game that illustrates this concept of Christ’s ownership over us. Get your child’s favorite toy, and use either fake or real money. Take the toy from your child and give them the money. Tell them that you are the clerk at the toy store, and they have to pay you the money in order to own the toy. After they have paid for the toy, give it to them, and emphasize that this is *their* toy, *their* possession, and no one can take it from them, not even you. After you have told them this, try and take the toy from them without offering any money. They will recognize that this is not right. Ask them to explain to you why you can’t just take their toy. The answer you are looking for is that it is *theirs.* They bought it, now they own it, and can do what they like. No one else has the right to the toy except for them.

Explain to them how our lives are like the toy. Just like the clerk had possession of the toy, sin and self rule our lives, earning us death. Christ paid the penalty for our sin so that we could be free from self and sin, just like they paid the money to own the toy. Christ redeemed us, paid our ransom, so now he owns us. We can no longer take our lives from him. He owns it, not us. No one has the right to our lives except Christ.

**Week 6: The Holy Spirit part 1**

Let’s face it. We as adult have a hard time understanding the Trinity, and more than likely, so do our children. This is one of the great mysteries of the faith that, though hard to grasp, must be embraced. I hesitate to give any type of illustration, because they all fail. The reality is, there is nothing like God; nothing to compare him to. In fact, we must be very careful when we make comparisons by using illustrations, because sometimes the illustrations can do a disservice.

In regards to the Trinity, most illustrations teach a form of Modalism. Modalism says that God exists as Father, *then* as Son, *then* as Holy Spirit, but not all three at the same time. This is the problem with the “water, ice, and vapor” illustration. The same molecules cannot exist in the three states simultaneously.

The clover illustration also presents a skewed view of the Trinity. The idea is that a clover is three leaves, and each leaf represents a person in the Godhead. The problem is that this presents a compartmentalized view of God. It is saying that it takes all three persons to make up God, but if you isolate them (tear off the leaf and you no longer have a flower. The leaf cannot stand on its own) then you don’t have God. In essence, it downplays the fact that each person of the trinity is fully God in and of themselves. Each person is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and share the same character qualities.

Is there a perfect illustration? No. Therefore I recommend not using them.

**Week 7: The Holy Spirit part 2**

Praying in the Spirit: Paul uses this phrase in two contexts: In 1 Corinthians 14:14-15, Paul uses the phrase to refer to the gift of speaking with tongues. He says that praying in tongues means that the person with this gift is praying with their spirit. The reference here is not to the Holy Spirit, but to the believer’s spirit who has the gift of tongues.

The second use is found in Ephesians 6:18. Here, Paul is referring to the Holy Spirit, and he is saying that in order to put on the full armor of God, the believer must pray at all times and in all occasions “in the Holy Spirit.” To pray in the Spirit is to pray in the realm of and under the influence of the Spirit. Our prayers are to be directed by him, not our own selfish desires or wants. When we pray “in the Spirit”, our prayers will be focused on the will of God and the glory of Christ and his kingdom, and not the fulfillment of our own selfish pursuits.

**Week 8: Growing as a Disciple**

Temptation: In both the Hebrew and the Greek, the same word is used to refer to two different concepts. One is an activity of God, and one is of Satan. God often *tests* his people as the means of a refining process in which he separates the dross from the pure gold. This refining is meant to make us more like Christ. The second usage carries the idea of *to tempt or probe* in order to find some weakness. This is the activity of Satan that he employs with malicious intent.

However, God uses even the temptations of Satan for the disciples good. Though Satan’s intent in his temptation is malicious, God’s intent in allowing Satan to tempt is holy and God. Just as God tests us in order to form Christ in us, he also allows Satan to tempt us for the same purpose. Through learning how to endure temptation, we become more like Christ in our obedience.

Often times the two concepts overlap. We see this in the story of Job. God tests Job, while Satan tempts him to sin. This is how things play out in our lives as well. God puts us through tough circumstances, and Satan comes and tempts us to doubt God or feel sorry for ourselves.

**Week 9: Prayer**

Teaching Your Kids to Pray: The Lord’s Prayer is the perfect place to start to teach your children to pray. One of the things I have done to help my kids work through this and teach them is to divide the principles of the Lord’s Prayer up into six questions:

1. What do you like about God?
2. What are you thankful for?
3. In what way do you need God to help you to do His will?
4. What need do you have today that you need God to take care of?
5. Do you need to ask God to forgive you of something?
6. Who do you need to pray for?

These are some great questions to ask your children to get them praying.