

# Essentials of Discipleship

## Chapter 4 – Purity of Life

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**Resource:** Essentials of Discipleship by Francis Cosgrove published by Roper Press in 1988.

*This short 12 chapter book outlines eleven essentials of what a disciple of Jesus Christ is and how each disciple should become a disciple-making disciple. These study guides offer an outline of the book with some questions to be used in reviewing and discussing the content. Each student will need to obtain and read the book as well. After the initial chapters titled: What is a Disciple? & The Disciple is a Learner; the author reviews the Lordship of Jesus Christ which is the umbrella for the remaining nine essentials or characteristics of a disciple.*

Introduction - EOD #3: A disciple is committed to a life of purity and is taking steps to separate from sin.

A. Summary (Chapter 1):

Paul wrote a lot about living a pure life. He challenged us to godliness and righteous living. We are told to put off whatever possible so we can then put on good things in the process of separating ourselves from sin. We do not believe or practice evil as the world does.

B. Scriptures:

1. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ephesians 4:21-5:5 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Colossians 3:5-10 \_\_\_\_\_
4. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Titus 2:12-14 \_\_\_\_\_

C. Introductory comments:

1. What is the greatest contrast between believers and unbelievers?
2. Why is it likely a new believer will or should assume his or her style of life will need to be changed?

I. Repentance

- A. Romans 6:19 speaks of the way God wants Christians to live in repentance of wrong-doing (sin which is essentially the unwillingness to obey God). What does repentance mean to you personally? Contrast this with the world's understanding that one simply needs to be sorry.
- B. Why is it important that repentance and conversion go together? Can we have one without the other?
- C. To consciously pursue holiness, one has to intentionally separate from the wrong or harmful influences that drag us down and affect our reflections of Jesus Christ. Do you sense a process of offering the parts of your body in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness?

II. Evidence of Repentance

1. The Holy Spirit using the Word of God (written Word = Bible and Jesus as the Living Word) is responsible for changing our lives and lifestyles. What then is our part in this process?
  2. What happens to us when we truly meet Jesus? Specifically, what happened to you? What is your story (testimony)? What can you testify (tell) about realizing the Lordship of Jesus Christ?
- A. Evidence #1 – A Change of Attitudes
1. Review why Cosgrove says we must have a change of attitude about repentance. Of sin? Of salvation? Of daily issues of life? (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- B. Evidence #2 – A Change of Desires
1. Should disciples continue to strive for possessions, fame or a reputation (materialism)? \_\_\_\_ Should we worry about what others think about us and our selfish ambitions? \_\_\_\_ Some have said that we should be less concerned about leaving a personal legacy but leave a strong legacy about Jesus Christ. \_\_\_\_

C. Evidence #3 – An Abhorrence of Sin

1. With the Holy Spirit living in us, it seems likely that a committed believer will avoid evil in every form (in thought, word and deed). Why should we commit to obeying the Ten Commandments? Does doing so give us more merit as credit for our salvation or is doing so primarily to show our love for the Triune God?

D. Evidence #4 – Breaking off Old Influences

1. A friend noted for very successful networking marketing business says that “If you can’t change the people around you then change the people around you”. What does that mean for you? Are there people who are discouraging you in your faith? Why is this important to a new believer?
2. Does God want us to drop all of our non-Christian relationships? Can you win them to Christ?
3. Scriptures says we are “born again” implying a new way of life. We can break away from old or bad influences and begin a new life. This is why a new believer has some excitement. Describe if and how this happened to you and if this has been a challenge for you and your friends.

III. God’s Standard for Purity of Life

1. Cosgrove says that purity of life begins in our heart. We are told to guard our hearts. Christians believe it is possible to stand before a Holy God knowing that our heart is impure if we have \_\_\_\_\_ our sins and received God’s \_\_\_\_\_?
2. Why is forgiveness of ourselves and others so important? Can we forgive others if we do not know of the forgiveness of God?

IV. The Battle for Purity

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. What is the hope we find in this verse?

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What helps us say no to ungodliness and worldly passions?

- A. The Help of the Holy Spirit (which we receive the moment we believe by submitting to the Lordship of Christ)
  1. What makes us sensitive to sin? Keep in mind our body is the “temple” or the place that the Spirit resides on earth.
  2. How can we grieve or disobey the Holy Spirit? Discuss if this is serious or not?
  3. Through the Holy Spirit, Christians have the power to live a pure Godly life. Did you know that it is our responsibility to want godliness and righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_
- B. The Battle is between the Flesh and the Spirit (Flesh means our old sinful nature). Our old nature is to sin or live contrary to the law of God. We are constantly drawn toward the old nature (the old man).
  1. What are we to do when faced with tough decisions, temptations and selfish desires?
  2. Since we can never be sinless like Christ, what is God’s solution as a Holy God facing us in our un-holiness?
- C. The Example of Paul
  1. How did God rescue Paul from his dilemma in the battle between his flesh and his spirit? (Romans 8:1-2).
  2. How are the two laws active in flying an airplane and how does that help us understand the tension between the law of Spirit of Life vs. the law of Sin & Death?

V. Areas of Purity of Life

- A. We Are to Be Pure in Spirit, in Body, in Thoughts, in Speech, Dealings with Others, Business Dealings and in Personal Relationships.
  1. Which one is your greatest challenge? \_\_\_\_\_
  1. Do you have a true friend that “sticks closer than a brother? Read Proverbs 18:24.

VI. Conclusion (A Prescription)

The battle for purity is challenging but not impossible or hopeless. What is the prescription when we fall or sin? Cosgrove says it is a matter of \_\_\_\_\_ to God – a matter of \_\_\_\_\_ to Him to live His way. But if we sin, then \_\_\_\_\_ it immediately and seek \_\_\_\_\_. The way we know that our sin is cleansed is that God \_\_\_\_\_ us on the basis of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary.

**TMS D4 – BE CHRIST’S DISCIPLE – Separate From the World for Chapter 4 (Romans 12:2)**

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