

Essentials of Discipleship

Chapter 6 – The Importance of the Bible

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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.

- I. Introduction – EOD #5: A disciple demonstrates faithfulness and a desire to learn and apply the Word of God through hearing it preached and taught, reading it frequently, Bible study, Scripture memory, and meditation on the Scriptures.
 - A. Summary (from chapter 1): Faithful in the discipline of Bible study, etc. means “consistent”. Cosgrove says it is not enough to take in the Word of God (Bible) only with a weekly diet of listening to a sermon. We need to write down things we hear then dig deeper into the Scriptures ourselves. I have always tried to heed the advice to be a missionary to my own soul before becoming a missionary of the Good News for others. Be a true disciple who desires to learn and apply the Word of God through regular Bible study personally and in a small group. John 8:31 records Jesus’ own words this requirement for His disciples. “Continue” means to practice and obey (not just hear) God’s Word every day. It means we hear, read, study, memorize & meditate on God’s Word continually.
 - B. Scriptures:
 1. John 8:31 _____
 2. Acts 2:42 _____
 3. Acts 17:11 _____
 4. Colossians 3:16 _____
 5. 2 Timothy 2:15 _____
 - C. Opening Comments: This chapter will address two major areas – why God gave us the Bible and how we go about being in the word in order to improve our effectiveness in making use of it.
- II. Why God Gave Us the Bible
The Bible is the way God has r_____ h_____ to mankind for our f_____ and p_____.
 - A. The Bible Reveals the God of Salvation to us
 1. The Word of God helps us recognize and acknowledge our need for a Savior from sin.
 2. What is the heart of evangelism? _____
 3. What is the hope we find in Scriptures? _____
 4. Can someone be saved apart from the Word of God? _____ Why? _____
 5. Reminder: The Holy Spirit uses the reading & memorization of the Word of God to challenge and comfort us.
 - B. The Bible Cleanses Us from our Sins
 1. If we don’t read God’s Word, the Holy Spirit cannot deal with us to cleanse us of sins so that we can live a pure life as a disciple. Does this make sense?
 2. Cosgrove says that God’s Word is like a _____ agent used to wash away our sinful habits.
 3. The Bible is _____ for our souls.
 - C. The Bible enables us to Grow Spiritually
 1. The disciple is one who grows spiritually
 2. Explain the differences between the need for “milk” vs. “solid food”. (1 Peter 2:2-3)
 3. New Christians usually need others to feed them milk but maturity in one’s faith means you will eat solid food on your own. Explain the implications.
 - D. The Bible Guides and Directs Us through Life
 1. A key verse to memorize is Proverbs 3:5-6. Why is it important to put this verse into your heart?
 2. Another key memory verse is Psalm 37:4-5. What is the assurance given to us in this passage?

- E. The Bible Empowers Us in our Evangelism
 1. Being in the Word of God helps us witness effectively for Christ. To be effective, we must know the Scriptures. We are ambassadors for Christ. An ambassador for a Country cannot say whatever he or she wishes. We are to say what God and His Word says. Read Proverbs 22:20-21 for 30 sayings of counsel & knowledge.
- F. The Bible Helps us live the Life of a Disciple
 1. Why is 2 Timothy 3:16-17 so important?
 2. Why does a disciple need teaching? Rebuking? Correcting? Training in Righteousness?
 3. Explain Figure 2 that visibly Illustrate this verse. What do you do when you get of the right path?

III. How we get to know the Bible

What are the 5 means of taking in the Word of God (see Figure 3)?

- (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____
 (4) _____ (5) _____

A. Hearing the Word of God

1. First, we must hear the Word of God from godly preachers / teachers.
2. What ways do you regularly hear the Word of God?
3. Review Romans 10:17 _____
4. Do you take notes on what you hear?
5. How will we be blessed in what we do? (James 1:22-25)

B. Reading the Word of God

1. Discuss your current plan of reading the Bible.

C. Studying the Word of God

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:15? This is the AWANA verse (Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed). Explain this verse: _____
2. Disciples are to carefully search the Scriptures. What does it mean to “be like the Bereans”? (Acts 17:11)
 - (1) Bible study must be consistent; systematic; contain original investigation; include written reproduction; have application to daily living; and must be “pass-on-able”. We usually understand concepts better when we communicate them in words.

D. Memorizing the Word of God

Note: the Navigators (staff) are well known for both one-on-one discipleship training and Scripture memorization. Since Christ is your Lord, you must memorize Scriptures. Suggested memory verses: Joshua 1:8; I Peter 3:15; Colossians 3:16; Psalm 1:1-3; Philippians 4:13

NOTE: the Topical Memory System (TMS) by the Navigators is offered on medicalmobilizers.org.

1. Advantages of Scripture Memory
Review the 16 advantages offered. Which of these is the most important advantage for you at this time? #s _____
2. General Rules for Scripture Memory - Note the 8 rules for memorizing Scripture. Be sure to have an accountability partner (friend) to help you with this tough challenge.

E. Meditating on the Word of God

1. What is meditation per Cosgrove? _____
2. Did you notice that we can and should meditate on what we hear, read, study and memorize?
3. There are 5 ways mentioned to meditate on the Word of God? Write these ways on a 3x5 card.

IV. Conclusion - A disciple of Christ is loyal to his or her Savior and Lord and actively takes in the Word of God using the five means mentioned in this chapter.

TMS D6 – BE CHRIST’S DISCIPLE – Be Steadfast for Chapter 6 (Hebrews 12:3)