

Learn from Jesus' Disciples Part 2

“33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33 KJV)

We will continue in this message to speak how to put God first, learning from Jesus' disciples about the pitfall that they fell in at the time when Jesus arrested and failed to put God first. We had already discussed the following points that we should totally avoid:

1. ***Strife***
2. ***Love of positions and titles***
3. ***Pride and overconfidence***
4. ***Lack of preparation and good stewardship***
5. ***Prayerlessness***
6. ***The love of money***

7. ***Anger:*** ***“49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? 50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. 51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.” (Luke 22:49-51 KJV)*** Anger is another bad attitude that hinders us from serving the Lord. The disciples of Jesus when faced with those who came to arrest Jesus were angered, and one reacted and cut the ear of the servant of the high priest. Their reaction did not help the Lord but added more trouble to Him and required another work to mend the situation. Likewise the attitude and the behavior of the disciples did not show their full trust in the Lord and did not give a good testimony to the onlookers.

Anger is an attitudinal problem and those who choose to express anger in their decisions and actions will continually be led to do react impulsively that will not pave the way for the righteous life that God desires. ***“19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. 21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” (James 1:19-21)*** Anger comes from the world and is likened to moral filth of this world. Those who have the outburst of anger are still have the worldly desires in them like pride, arrogance, revenge, rebellion, jealousy, evil thoughts and worldly influences. ***So if we still have anger and react badly to some events or we sometimes cannot hold our temper, we need to check ourselves and let us allow the Holy Spirit to search us and convict us of any sin or moral filth that we are exposed to – bad friends, ungodly relatives, worldliness, watching TV and movies, News, playing games, attending parties, or more time spent on the Media.*** After we recognize the things that create outburst of anger into our heart, let us repent and turn away from those things. Then let us be soaked with the Word of God and allow the Holy Spirit to cleanse us from anger and all filthiness so that God can take the first place in our hearts and life, and we can serve Him joyfully.

8. ***Rebelliousness:*** ***“52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? 53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” (Luke 22:52-53 KJV)*** Jesus asked the

chief priests, ***“Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves”***, but the event portrayed that the disciples were acting rebelliousness when they showed defiance to what was going on and did not wait upon the Lord's instruction. There were injustices toward Jesus and His mission, but the way the disciples reacted that night did not render any help or glory to the Lord.

When we follow Christ we are exposed to injustices as what Jesus experienced. But we need to face it in a proper way that glorifies God and testifies that God and His Word is our priority:

a). ***Accept the fact that when we are in Christ we face injustices in the form of insult, abuse, oppression, solitude, or our rights being withheld. Sadly a good number of people who set their hearts to serve God are still not accepting that injustice is part of the call of Jesus that we need to suffer. Ultimately let us respond positively to injustices knowing that our Lord is our righteous Judge.***

b). ***Do not react or show disturbance when faced with injustice, instead let us be at peace in the Lord and rejoice. “22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. 23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.” (Luke 6:22-23 KJV)***

c). ***Do not think to take revenge of injustice received but let God avenge. “18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” (Romans 12:18-19 KJV)***

d). ***Pray and ask God what to do. “28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.” (Luke 6:28 KJV)*** Let us learn to listen intently to God and do what God instructs us to do by His Word and the conviction of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. ***“20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:20-21 KJV)***

9- ***Trusting man:*** ***“54 Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.” (Luke 22:54-55 KJV)*** Peter was following at a distance from where the Lord Jesus was taken. When Peter saw that the temple guards kindled fire in the courtyard he went and sat down with them to be warmed. He assumed favor and convenience in the gathering of those people who seized Jesus, but thereafter in that spot Peter denied Christ.

To look upon people to give us comfort and to support us in serving God is never an advantage. Moreover, if we who serve God continue to keep relationships with influential people thinking that they will be of help in times of need we will surely be wrecked. The same people whom we trust will soon let us down and cause us to fall. Trusting men and people, keeping contact and connection with them means that we sit down with them, agree with their plans and lifestyles until we are carried away to wet their appetites and support them in their

wickedness. “5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. 6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. 7 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. 8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” (Jeremiah 17:5-8 KJV)

Let us then fear the Lord and trust in His promises alone. “25 **The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.**” (Proverbs 29:25 KJV) Let us trust God in every way and not to rely on ourselves or on people. The Lord has His own ways to accomplish things for our good and for His glory.

10. Mingling with non-believers: “56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. 57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. 58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. 59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. 60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. 61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.” (Luke 22:56-62 KJV) To socialize, associate or intermingle with non-believers is another hindrance for us in keeping God our first priority. One important thing is that at certain times workers and the servants of God are not much aware of the danger of being yoked with non-believers. Sometimes it just starts on a desire to witness and to win souls but on the contrary we end up with contacts, friends, connections and relationships with various people who work adversely in our lives and make us put God not in the first place of our lives anymore. Gatherings, parties, outings, and other group activities have nowadays replaced the quality time of praying and reading the Bible.

Peter, when he denied Christ, he was in the midst of non-believers or people who do not delight to follow God’s ways. Peter’s faith in the Lord declined while he was surrounded by those people and finally he found himself being ashamed of Christ and denying Him.

We go to the homes of non-believers to preach the good news of salvation and not to join them in their happy get together and activities. If we go and spend good time with them and befriend them, in return, we will be forced to invite them also to have a good time and party, and will be denied the opportunity to have Bible studies, prayer, counseling sessions, or other Christian meetings which seem boring activities for non-believers. As a result churches become social activity-centered and no more put God first in the center of the believers’ lives, thus harming the body of Christ – His Church, by bringing in people who are not committed to God.

We go to people to reach them with the good news of Jesus and try to teach them declaring the whole will of God in their lives. But if they are unwilling to follow God then we need to withdraw from them and avoid their company and unholy fellowships. “12 And when ye come into an house, salute it. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it:

but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. 15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.” (Matthew 10:12-15 KJV)

To put God first in our life is to avoid to be yoked with or to be bound or to fellowship with non-believers in order that the blessing of God will continue to flow in our lives and in God’s church: “1 **Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.**” (Psalm 1:1 KJV) You need to observe the following:

a). **Do not walk in the counsel of the wicked**: The man who does not seek and listen to the advice of wicked people is the one who put God first and is blessed by the Lord. The counsel and advice of worldly people actually takes away the blessing and favor of the Lord from us. Many a time, many people having problems in life seek counsel from professionals in the world but they avoid seeking counsel from the pastors and Godly people who know God’s Word and law. Surely they get the wrong advice and fall into more troubles in this wicked world.

b). **Do not stand in the way of sinners**: The stand and life principle of sinners contradicts the Word of God. But the principle of a righteous man is rooted in the Word of God. For sinners everything is allowed and in this world if we do not go along with friends and worldly passions and styles they say we are lost. Here is a trap that we should be aware of: When we keep friendship with people who are not fully committed and obedient to God or who do not know God, and if we keep meeting them, talking with them, or they keep inviting us and in return we too are inviting them, as a result there is a constant exchange of wrong advices, dangerous stimuli, and misleading opinions which get clogged in our mind and soon lead us away from our desire to put God first. “33 **Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. 34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.**” (1 Corinthians 15:33-34 KJV)

c). **Do not sit in the seat of scornful**: How we spend our time is very important. Are we busy with activities and unnecessary worldly celebrations? Birthday parties, Christmas, New Year, Valentine, Halloween, Father Day, Mother Day, etc. Do we spend more time on the internet, in cafés and sit with people who crack coarse jokes, gossip or mock Godly people? Another influence that corrupts our mind and character is when we sit down in front of people or in front of the television and other media devices that give us little truth and much of lies. Watching television programs and listening to world news is another instance of sitting with mockers and non-believers. More so media grabs much of our time and attention that gives us little time to read the Bible. Let us avoid watching television and media programs for in truth there is no good news that we hear but all the wickedness and bad events happening around the world, and from which we receive bad advices and it arouses wrong motives in our heart that soon blocks our desire to put God first.

Peter ended up weeping bitterly after he denied in the assembly of the mockers that he was the follower of the Lord Jesus. “61 **And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.**” (Luke 22:61-62 KJV)

Therefore, to learn from the disciples' mistakes and in order that we can really put God first in our hearts, let us repeatedly examine ourselves and continue to reflect the following:

1. Let us review our relationships with friends: Let us be aware and discerning about the type of friends we have and the extent of the relationship that we share with them. Some friends are abusive; while they are friends to us they take advantage of our friendship. Some friends are dangerous; they teach us wrong things or they put us into trouble and embarrassing situations. Some people make friends for diverse intents, numerous interests and motives that lead or bring vulnerable inputs or hazards in our life. Let us then be wise and listen to instruction to cut all unnecessary friendships and fellowships especially with non-believers. ***“14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18 KJV)***

2. Let us be quick to leave the wrong atmosphere: Let us replace the bad habits that we have with good and Godly character. Instead of watching news, TV shows or listening to worldly songs, let us immerse ourselves in the Word of God, enjoy Christian music and join Bible studies as much as we are able. ***“20 He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.” (Proverbs 13:20 KJV)*** Whenever we are in a non-Christian atmosphere, let us be smart to move away. Rather let us be together with the family of God, the church, and get more involve in God's services and Bible studies.

My Dear and Beloved: We learn so much from the ways and attitudes of the disciples of our Lord Jesus especially in times of difficulty. The disciples truly loved the Lord but were unaware of wrong things that took the place of God in their hearts; they were trapped in a certain situations and turned away from the Lord. **Let us therefore put away and avoid everything that hinders our priority to put God first. As we want to put God first let us be away from wrong people and wrong atmosphere. Instead, let us commit ourselves to be more with our brethren, with our pastors, teachers and church leaders who speak and live the Word of God. For he who puts God first, he who stands in the Word of God and lives by the Word of God will surely be blessed.**

Come now to the Lord and commit your life to Him and apply what you learned from the pitfalls of the disciples, that you will have self-control and avoid anger, rebelliousness, trusting man, and mingling with non believers. Avoid all such and train yourself to pray more and to read more of God's Word. Ask God wisdom how to handle circumstances and trials. Avoid friends, and avoid being yoked with non believers and opening your life to them. Check the list of your friends, and be quick to move away from the bad atmosphere, trusting God that as you obey Him, He will provide for you, protect you and supply all your needs. Pray and fast for every struggle that you are passing through, trusting God that He will take you out of it. Be more with the brethren of the church, get involved more in serving the Lord and He will help you. Ask counsel from the church in dealing with your problems and the

struggles that you are passing in your life so they will give you the Godly advices and declare to you the whole will of God that you need to do. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God, I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord, thank you for your Word in this message that teaches me how to put you first in my life, and the areas that I failed you and went out of your ways. Lord thank you for all the solutions and the advices I received of how to come back to you putting you first in my life.

Come now to God and confess and renounce all your sins. Confess and renounce your bad attitude of anger and aggressive reactions in certain circumstances. Confess and renounce your hatred, revenge, non forgiveness, grudge, bitterness, fights, envy and jealousy. Renounce all the worldliness, your greed, and your love for money and material things. Confess and renounce your yoke with non believers, many friends and in bondage with the TV, Media, News and games. Confess and renounce your rebelliousness, disobedience and non willingness to humble down and receive persecution and ill treatment. Confess and renounce your lack of faith, doubts and your trust on man and not on God. Confess and renounce your bad example and your non willingness to serve God and suffer for Him. Confess your lack of reading God's Word and your lack of prayers. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins

_____.
Lord I commit myself to the teaching that I received in this message to have self-control and avoid anger. Lord I humble myself, neither to rebel nor to fight back, trusting that justice comes from you; Lord I forgive those enemies _____, Lord I place them in your hand to deal with them, and teach me of what I need to do. Lord I commit myself to cut the following friends and the ungodly relationships _____. Lord I commit myself to serve you and to live my life for you according to the teaching that I received in this message. Lord I commit myself to quit spending time on the Media and News. Lord I commit myself to spend more time on reading your Word and in prayer. Lord I commit myself to be a good example to others and to reproduce more of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in my life; love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance so people will see Jesus through my life. Lord protect me and provide for me so I will continue to serve you. Lord I ask you to help me to overcome the following trial in my life _____ . this is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins, and committed themselves to put you first in their lives. Lord restore them back to you and use them to serve you. Lord answer their prayers, solve their problems, give them wisdom how to manage the struggles they are in, protect them and provide their needs so they will continue to serve you.

Lord as your church, we commit ourselves to put you first in our life and ministry. We commit ourselves to teach what we received in this message to our families, disciples and members. Lord we trust you that you can deliver us from the following enemies _____. Lord we ask you to refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in order to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to get water baptized and receive the Holy Spirit baptism. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the

whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

Learn from Jesus' Disciples Part 02. Matthew 6:33. Luke 22:49-62. James 1:19-21. Luke 6:22-23. Romans 12:18-21. Luke 6:28. Jeremiah 17:5-8. Proverbs 29:25. Matthew 10:12-15. Psalm 1:1. 1 Corinthians 15:33-34. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. Proverbs 13:20.

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