



Discipleship **Ideas for the Iowa District West**

Introduction

The following “Discipleship Ideas” from the readings are not intended for any other purpose than to provide ideas of application from each reading that may be included in the taught and preached Word for this particular Sunday to help teach a life of discipleship. L.C.M.S. pastors are gifted at preaching Law and Gospel, but often lack in the matter of personal applications to the Word. This tool is for no other reason than to offer some seeds of thought to do that.

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From C.P.H. About the Cover: Jesus was truly concerned for His followers and provided for them in many ways. He was also concerned for all those who would come to believe in Him after His time on earth ended. He prayed to His heavenly Father that they, too, would know the Father’s love, just as those who were with Him had come to know it. We have been blessed to know God’s love among us.

First Reading; Acts 1:12–26

¹²Then [the apostles] returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away.

¹³And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

¹⁵In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, ¹⁶“Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.” ¹⁸(Now this man bought a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ²⁰“For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

“May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it’;
and

“Let another take his office.’

²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” ²³And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” ²⁶And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: The concern for appropriate spiritual leadership in the Church has always been an important matter and that certainly was the case for the apostles following the death of Judas and the ascension of Jesus. The people desired and prayed for appropriate spiritual leadership. This remains a most important aspect of the Church today and the text can become a proper encouragement for modern disciples. By the grace of God, we can pray regularly for those who serve as ministers of Christ and for those whom God will choose to send to us to be ministers of Christ in the Church.

Epistle Reading Revelation 22:1–6, 12–20

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

⁶And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.”

¹²Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done.

¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

¹⁴Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify ¹⁶to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

¹⁷The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

¹⁸I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the

words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

²⁰He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Epistle Discipleship Notes: John's revelation tells something about the work of the Church. It is invitational! The Spirit and the bride say "come." How are we doing at that? As the bride of Christ, we have it all and ought to be desirous of sharing what we have. By the grace of God we can become much more invitational to those around us who are in need of God's mercy as are we.

Gospel Reading: John 17:20-26

²⁰[Jesus said:] "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Gospel Discipleship Notes: Our Savior's High Priestly Prayer is perhaps the most profound prayer in all of Scripture. What a joy and blessing it is to know that Jesus prayer for His immediate followers and for those of us who would come to know Him. In this prayer the Savior sought a unity with Him among those who believe and the ability to see and perceive His glory. As modern disciples today we can see the two primary applications of the previous readings fulfilled in this reading. The matters of prayer (1st reading) and outreach or invitation (2nd reading) exist in this prayer of our Lord. With His grace at work in us, we can find ourselves engaged in both.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read Acts 1:12–26

¹²Then [the apostles] returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

¹³And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

¹⁵In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, ¹⁶"Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." ¹⁸(Now this man bought a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ²⁰"For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

"May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it"; and

"Let another take his office."

²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." ²³And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." ²⁶And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1. From what had the apostles returned to Jerusalem?
2. What is meant by "one accord" and how does that associate with the fact that they devoted themselves to prayer together?
3. Why was it significant that there be a replacement for Judas among the apostles?
4. Is there any significance to the fact that a male was to be chosen even though there were women who had followed the Lord?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read Revelation 22:1–6, 12–20

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

⁶And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

¹²Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

¹⁴Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

¹⁷The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

¹⁸I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

²⁰He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

6. What do the first 5 verses of this reading tell you that make you happily anticipate heaven?
7. In this reading the Jesus says he is coming "soon" two different times. What is significant about the repetition of these words?
8. What is meant by the "Spirit and the Bride" who say "come"?
9. How is the going for the Bride in this day and age?
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

Read John 17:20–26

²⁰[Jesus said:] “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

11. What do we call what this reading is a part of?
12. What are the three primary things that Jesus prays for His followers to experience in this reading?
13. In what ways have we experienced them?
14. How do you see this reading associated with the two previous ones for today?
15. What application of this Gospel reading will you apply to your life as a result of hearing it today?

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline (Leader's Guide)

Read Acts 1:12–26

¹²Then [the apostles] returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

¹³And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

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²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." ²³And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." ²⁶And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1. From what had the apostles returned to Jerusalem?

They had just returned from the ascension of Christ into heaven.

2. What is meant by "one accord" and how does that associate with the fact that they devoted themselves to prayer together?

This "one accord" meant a unity of faith and Christian fellowship. It is only in such unity of faith and fellowship that common prayer can take place and avail much (James 5:16). This is one aspect of Church fellowship and why denominations separate themselves from one another.

3. Why was it significant that there be a replacement for Judas among the apostles?

It was significant because it was prophesied by David in the Psalms.

4. Is there any significance to the fact that a male was to be chosen even though there were women who had followed the Lord?

Yes. The replacement was to be a male not only to fulfill prophecy but also to be a full representative of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of Christ who was also a male.

5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read: Revelation 22:1–6, 12–20

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

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²⁰He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

6. What do the first 5 verses of this reading tell you that make you happily anticipate heaven?

Answers will vary.

7. In this reading the Jesus says he is coming "soon" two different times. What is significant about the repetition of these words?

This is repeated to confirm the truth of Christ's second coming, and the speediness of it.

8. What is meant by the “Spirit and the Bride” who say “come”?

The Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity and the Bride is the Church here on earth (See Ephesians 5:21-31).

9. How is the going for the Bride in this day and age?

Answers will vary but a great time for discussion about the Church’s desire to invite others into a relationship to Christ through the Gospel.

10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

READ: John 17:20–26

²⁰[Jesus said:] “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

11. What do we call what this reading is a part of?

Chapter 17 of John’s Gospel is often referred to as the “High Priestly Prayer” of Jesus.

12. What are the three primary things that Jesus prays for His followers to experience in this reading?

- 1. A unity or fellowship with God and with one another in Jesus’ name*
- 2. The blessing of being with Christ in heaven and experiencing His glory*
- 3. To experience the love of God in their lives*

13. In what ways have we experienced them?

Answers will vary.

14. How do you see this reading associated with the two previous ones for today?

The first reading dealt with the matter of prayer in the lives of the apostles and in the Church, the second reading dealt with the matter of invitation to be a part of Christ’s kingdom. This reading contains both concerns.

15. What application of this Gospel reading will you apply to your life as a result of hearing it today?

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

As modern disciples of Christ, the Church must find itself engaged in prayer and outreach. Today's readings talk of the importance of both since Christ is returning one day soon. Until that day we can by the grace of God continue to pray fervently in a common unity or fellowship of faith for the Church and its spiritual leadership as well as for the Church's mission which is to invite others into a relationship to Christ in the Church.

Discipleship Prayer Thought

Almighty God, grant us grace to find a special unity in the Church and a special joy in reaching out to others with an invitation to come into fellowship with You and with Your Church on earth. Help us to be eager in our desire to make You known through Your Word and to long for the glorious return of our Savior. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**