



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.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - SERIES C
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From C.P.H. About the Cover: We are aware of those who suffer. We also know it is our responsibility to be of aid and comfort to them as we are able. Our heavenly Father took pity on us and sent His Son to be our Savior. We are to take pity on others and tell them about Jesus and give them comfort in this life, just as Jesus has done for us.

First Reading: Amos 6:1–7

- ¹Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel comes!
- ²Pass over to Calneh, and see, and from there go to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are you better than these kingdoms? Or is their territory greater than your territory,
- ³O you who put far away the day of disaster and bring near the seat of violence?
- ⁴Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory and stretch themselves out on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall,
- ⁵who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David invent for themselves instruments of music,
- ⁶who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
- ⁷Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile, and the revelry of those who stretch themselves out shall pass away.”

1st Reading Discipleship Notes: Amos identified another age-old sin of man in the unwillingness to know what is good and right to do, but fail to do it. He identified a potential root of that unwillingness in feeling overly secure in one's own life. When there is that tendency, there is also the tendency to carry no concern for others or concern about the spiritual condition of those around you or of your own people. Such a tendency can only be overcome by personally identifying the reality that this sin exists in the life of the disciple, then to repent of it and to trust in the mercy of God for forgiveness and the help of the Holy Spirit so to amend our sinful lives. Only then we might only show mercy to others, and also seek to do whatever we can to show the importance of the spiritual life in the Church to the world around us and around the world.

Epistle Reading 1 Timothy 3:1–13

¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

⁸Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. ¹¹Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Epistle Discipleship Notes: Paul gives some appropriate guidelines to those who desire to be pastors or "overseers" in the church as well as those who serve in other spiritual leadership positions. He calls for lives that are above reproach, and lists a number of other appropriate qualifications for such individuals. The application of this text is not limited merely to the pastors and other spiritual leaders, however. There is a purpose in such expectations of spiritual leadership, but it carries over to those they serve. The purpose is to represent Christ to the world around us. By the grace of God, the qualities Paul sought in spiritual leadership can be mimicked as well among the people of God in the Church and serve as a testimony of what God can accomplish in the world through anyone's life.

Gospel Reading: Luke 16:19–31

¹⁹[Jesus said:] "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover,

even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' ²⁵But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' ²⁷And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— ²⁸for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' ²⁹But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' ³⁰And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' ³¹He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

Gospel Discipleship Notes: This reading is not intended to describe heaven and hell or the ability to communicate between them or any other such thing. The reading is intended to show the importance of listening to and growing in the Word of God. We have Moses and the Prophets as well as the apostles and the evangelists whose writings have all pointed us to the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. In Him we have salvation. We best apply our hearts and lives in the direction of God's Word and by His grace are enabled to do so. When that is the case, we can also be witnesses to those who fail to listen to the Word as well as to those in need like poor Lazarus who lay each day in need at our gates.

Adult/High School Youth Discipleship Bible Study Outline

Read **Amos 6:1–7**

- ¹Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel comes!
- ²Pass over to Calneh, and see, and from there go to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are you better than these kingdoms? Or is their territory greater than your territory,
- ³O you who put far away the day of disaster and bring near the seat of violence?
- ⁴Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory and stretch themselves out on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall, ⁵who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David invent for themselves instruments of music,
- ⁶who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
- ⁷Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile, and the revelry of those who stretch themselves out shall pass away."

1. What does it mean to be "at ease in Zion"?
2. Why does Amos make the comparison to other nations in verse 2?
3. What would be a modern day reflection of this problem?
4. What was the ultimate concern for those living at ease?
5. What application from this reading might you make for your life?

Read **1 Timothy 3:1–13**

¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

⁸Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. ¹¹Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

6. How are we to understand the term “overseer”?
7. Why are the things mentioned in the list of qualifications a “must” for an overseer?
8. How are we to understand the role or position of a “deacon”?
9. Discuss the differences in the qualifications of the two positions and why it might be so.
10. How might this reading encourage us to live more serious lives of discipleship with regard to our faith?

Read: Luke 16:19–31

¹⁹[Jesus said:] “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ ²⁷And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house— ²⁸for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ ²⁹But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ ³¹He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

11. In most situations, the text will read something like, “Jesus told them a parable” and then go on to tell the parable. In this text it is not mentioned. How do we know that it is a parable?
12. Every parable has a particular spiritual lesson, what is the lesson of this one?
13. How is this parable important for this modern age?
14. Why is verse 31 so vital for us 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 Amos 6:1-7

- ¹Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel comes!
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- ⁶who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
- ⁷Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile, and the revelry of those who stretch themselves out shall pass away."

1. What does it mean to be "at ease in Zion"?

This was an expression meaning feel overly secure about one's relationship to God in the Church. Amos was addressing people whose lives were supposed to be godly, but they were living in denial of their disobedience and apathy toward God and His divine will. Their affluence had caused them to become lazy and uncaring about those in need or about the need to maintain and protect God's truths.

2. Why does Amos make the comparison to other nations in verse 2?

Israel had become lazy and had this feeling that they were above all other nations and that no one could harm them because of their affluence and past history. Other nations not unlike their own had fallen to greater nations and making this comparison was an attempt of Amos to cause the Israelites to take a look at themselves in the light of others.

3. What would be a modern day reflection of the problem?

Allow for suggestions.

4. What was the ultimate concern for those living at ease?

Their loss of a spiritual kingdom and their nation's destruction was the ultimate concern.

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

Read: 1 Timothy 3:1–13

¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

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6. How are we to understand the term “overseer”?

It is to be understood as that of the role of a pastor

7. Why are the things mentioned in the list of qualifications a “must” for an overseer?

The overseer or pastor is a representative of Christ in the Church and the community. These qualifications are a must because Christ was a perfect person whose life was sacrificed for the sins of us all. A pastor's life is likewise to be a type of sacrifice that shows to the congregation and the community the love of God which is for all people.

8. How are we to understand the role or position of a “deacon”?

This is a role of someone in the church who is serving in the Church but not as an ordained pastor. This person can be someone like an elder in the Church, or he can be someone actually staffed in the Church to do tasks that assist the pastor like a DCE or an Evangelist who is trained to serve in the Church as well.

9. Discuss the differences in the qualifications of the two positions and why it might be so.

Responses will vary. The one common concern should be, however, that these men (and their families) are representatives of Christ and the Christian life both to the people and to the community.

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

READ: Luke 16:19–31

¹⁹[Jesus said:] “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ ²⁷And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house— ²⁸for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ ²⁹But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ ³¹He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

11. In most situations, the text will read something like, “Jesus told them a parable” and then go on to tell the parable. In this text it is not mentioned. How do we know that it is a parable?

A parable has a spiritual lesson to teach as does this story about the rich man and Lazarus. This story also deals with communication from the afterlife, something not taught about elsewhere in the Scripture. Furthermore, someone in hell would also be one who would have no concern for those yet living on earth.

12. Every parable has a particular spiritual lesson, what is the lesson of this one?

The lesson of the parable is that we are given God’s Word through Moses, the prophets, the evangelists and apostles all of which point us to the salvation which is ours in Christ Jesus. This being the case, it is wise and sensible for us to heed God’s Word and listen to it and take it to heart as it points us to Christ Jesus and the life He has for us and the life we are to reflect of Him who is the Light of the World.

13. How is this parable important for this modern age?

Responses will vary but in this modern world, like the days of Amos and the days of Christ, people abandon the Word for anything that sounds attractive to them. The lesson to be learned is to turn back to that Word and that lesson is as necessary and practical today as ever.

14. Why is verse 31 so vital for us today?

Here Christ was making reference not only to the request of the rich man for Lazarus to rise from the dead and proclaim the truth, but even more important is His own resurrection that He knew people would reject as well.

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

Discipleship Bulletin Blub

Where would we be today if we were to neglect the Word of the Lord in our lives? Have you ever considered that question? People in Amos' day did so and as a result they faced eternal destruction as well as temporal destruction. People in our Saviors' day faced the same. It is no different today. People need to hear and take to heart the Word of the Lord. Therefore God has sent overseers and others in the Church to make the love of God known to the world. By God's grace we can heed that Word and enjoy the multitude of benefits and blessings that come to us as a result.

Discipleship Prayer Thought

Heavenly Father, grant the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives that we might hear the life giving Word of God in our worship and in our daily walk with You that we might never loose sight of the mercy which is ours in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Grant faithful pastors and other spiritual leaders in our Church who duly reflect Christ Jesus and teach us to continually rejoice in Your mercy and guidance given us through the living Word of God. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**