

Letting The Beauty Of Jesus Be Seen



In Me ...

By Bill Fairchild, Jr.



Uses for This Lesson Material

This lesson material has been designed for multiple uses. You will find below several of those uses. It is our intent through this material to lead individuals to a deeper appreciation for our God who made us ... appreciation for His revealed Word that serves to guide and comfort us ... and to help prepare our souls for eternity! May the Lord bless you as you study from His Word!

Individual Study:

You can go through this series of lessons on your own at a pace that you are comfortable with. It would be suggested that you study one lesson per week to give you time to really consider the content of each lesson.

Group Study:

You can use this series of lessons in a group setting such as a young people's devotion where each one who attends the class agrees to keep up with the study from class to class.

Bible Class Curriculum:

This series of lessons is suitable for a 13-week or quarterly study and it contains sufficient material to be implemented both Sunday morning and Wednesday night if needed.

One-On-One Study:

This series of lessons is suitable for you and a friend to study together from week to week. And both of you will experience personal growth in your faith and service to the Lord.

... Bill

LETTING THE BEAUTY OF JESUS BE SEEN IN ME

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AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR STUDY!

Beauty ...

Attracts our attention ... causes us to stop and look closely, and enjoy.

Why?

It makes us smile.

It makes us happy inside.

It is pleasing to us.

We see beauty every day ... flowers, trees, sunsets, rivers, mountains, animals, birds. There are so many vivid colors and designs. I know you can think of many more examples of beauty.

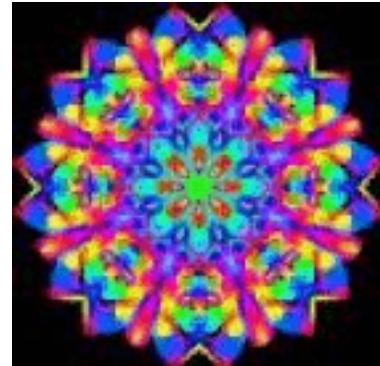
Who created this beauty?

Was Jesus a part of creating this beauty?

Read the words of Hebrews 1:1-3 ...

Also read the words of John 1:1-5 ...

Did He create beauty for you to enjoy?



Have you ever looked into a kaleidoscope? They come in different styles, but they all have an eyeglass on one end of a round, tube-like body, and a wheel on the other end that contains small pieces of colored glass. You aim the kaleidoscope toward light, look into the tube, and turn the wheel. As you do, beautiful multi-colored designs appear. These are fascinating ... little bits and pieces of glass are transformed into intricate designs and patterns.

Just as a kaleidoscope uses pieces of glass to produce beautiful designs, your life could use teachings from the life of Jesus ... the Creator of all beauty ... to produce beauty that radiates into the lives of people you see each day.

For example ... when you wake up in the morning and start your day giving thanks to God in prayer for the gift of a new day, it is very easy to smile. You have had the awesome opportunity to talk to the creator of the universe and tell Him you love Him and are thankful for His gift to you. Then you greet your brother or sister or mom or dad or friend or classmate with a happy heart ... and your smile lets them see your happy heart ... and gives them a happy feeling inside!

How do you feel when they smile back at you?

How do you feel when they don't?

When others look at you, they should see God as the light and the characteristics of His Son, Jesus Christ as the bits and pieces of glass that create the beauty they see in you.

The same principles of the kaleidoscope are true when it comes to looking at the life and character of Jesus Christ the Son of God! Who is this one called Jesus Christ and what was He really like? Did He really heal the sick ... raise the dead ... and rise from the grave after being crucified and buried in a borrowed tomb? You may be surprised to know that after some 2,000 years ... those questions are still being asked and they are being answered with as much interest or reproach as they were when Jesus walked the hills and valleys, the streets and villages of Judea!

How can you learn about these characteristics of Jesus to make them a part of your life? As you read about Jesus in the Bible, among other things you will learn about ...

- His life

- How He dealt with friends

- How He dealt with enemies

- The way He dealt with problems and trials in His own life

- The way He dealt with other men's problems and trials

- The words He spoke

- The things He did

- His own death

- His victory over death

The many pieces to the life of Jesus are there as examples for us to imitate.

When Jesus took the time to reveal His reason for coming to earth, He was simple and direct. He came to “**serve and to give**” (Mark 10:45). He came to do for others regardless of the cost.

He didn’t come to be in the spotlight or to be in the center ring or to capture all the headlines or get His picture on the cover of popular magazines. No ... He came to **serve** and to **give**. **Jesus wants the same thing for each of us!**

When we can learn, whether we’re 9, 15, 18, or 45, to build into our own lives the same serving and giving qualities that characterized Jesus Christ, we will become more like our Lord.

During this study, we will look at some truths that characterized the life and beauty of Jesus Christ. You will be challenged and encouraged to adopt the beautiful qualities of His character and life in your own life so that these wonderful traits can be seen in you!

If you really want to become more like Jesus and let His beauty and His character be seen in you, you need to do some things regularly. **You need to apply the Bible to your own life!** Sometimes the applying of God’s Word to our own lives can be very difficult ... changes need to be made ... habits broken ... new habits formed ... attitudes need to be changed, etc.

1. Begin every Bible study session you have, whether privately or with others, with prayer! Ask the Lord to help you have an open mind and a receptive heart.
2. Use a good study Bible that is your own! Don’t be afraid to underline and to write in the margin. Make it **your** study Bible! Consider the New King James or the New American Standard Bible. Also the English Standard Version.
3. Learn to work your way through each Bible study.
 - Look up all the Bible verses.
 - Think about any questions asked and about any answers given.
 - Write down any questions that might come up in your mind and ask someone who can give you a truthful answer.
 - Learn to memorize some of the verses or at least where they appear in the Bible (i.e., Book, chapter, etc.).
 - Spend some **quiet** time just thinking about a lesson or even a single point in a lesson.

4. Keep a notebook and include extra thoughts you might have, etc. It always helps to put down on paper the things we're thinking about or are concerned about.
5. Apply each of these studies to your own life.
 - Ask the Lord for wisdom and guidance.
 - Be willing to put into practice the things you learn.
 - Be willing to turn from things you learn to be wrong.
 - God wants us to apply what we learn so that we will change and grow.
6. Go back from time to time and study through these lessons. I hope you will return to them often for review and encouragement as you continue to grow in your own faith.

Take time to really think about these things ... pray to God asking Him to help you to be teachable. Be encouraged by the wonderful things you can learn and be thankful for the opportunity God gives each of us to be His children, His faithful servants!

You'll be glad you did all of these things ... I promise!

Now I would like for you to make a promise ... promise yourself that as you study this series you will take some of the characteristics of Jesus Christ and make them characteristics of your own life!

I PROMISE!

(Your name here!)



WHO DO YOU SAY THAT JESUS IS?

Text:

“When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying ‘Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?’ So they said, ‘some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’” Matthew 16:13-15

Introduction:

There is no doubt that when Jesus asked this question of His disciples (followers) all agreed that Jesus was a special person!

What **did** the people of Jesus’ day say about Him?

What did His disciples tell Jesus the people were saying?

- Some thought He may have been John the Baptist, back from the dead.
- Some thought He might be the prophet, Elijah back from heaven.
- Still others thought He must be one of the other prophets of God, back to help revive Israel to its previously glorious state in the world community.

We know that today, historians agree that a man named Jesus lived and breathed ... walked and talked on this earth ... for a few years. They generally agree that He was a good man.

What we will be looking at in this study will show it is not just the fact that He lived that makes Jesus important ... it is the way that He lived that should cause us to view Him as the Son of God!

Jesus, as the Master Teacher often did, turned the question to His disciples for them to answer personally. He already knew what was in the hearts of His disciples, but He wanted them to express their thoughts on this question out loud. He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?”

Peter answered Him ... *“Thou are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”*

We want to take a look a closer look at some truths regarding Jesus that are taught in God’s Word and then ask ourselves some personal questions.

Let's Get Started ...

Please read and discuss each of the following scriptures to see what we know about Jesus:

1. John 1:1-3 He was with God when our earth was formed and time as we know it began, and He helped make all things.
2. Matt. 1:18-25 He left heaven and came to earth to be born of a virgin named Mary ... a young girl who had never been with any man. He was always the son of God ... now He became the Son of man as well!
3. John 1:18 He was in the bosom of the Father, then a child here on earth. John 16:28, John 17:5. He was deity!

What is deity...God in human form.
4. Phil. 2:7-11 He came to earth to live as a servant for 30 something years. Not as a king ... He came to serve the people His Father had created.
5. Matt. 28:18 Was there anything Jesus couldn't do if He really wanted to?
6. Matt. 14:25-27 He could control the wind and walk on the sea.
7. Matt. 4:23 He could heal really sick people.
8. John 11:41-45 He could bring the dead back to life.
9. John 2:23-25 He could read the hearts of the people.
10. John 10:17-18 He allowed himself to be crucified.
11. John 19:10-11 He conducted himself with dignity while He was being ridiculed, humiliated and persecuted.
12. Acts 1:11 He returned to heaven to be with His Father.
13. John 14:6 He is the only way we can get to the Father.
14. John 17:20 He prayed for you.
15. John 17:24-26 He wants you to be in heaven with Him.

16. Heb. 4:15 He was tempted by the evil one to sin ... to disobey His Father's will? Are you ever tempted to disobey God?

17. Acts 10:38 He went about doing good!

Do **you** believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God?

Each one of us must answer Jesus' question ... *"But who do you say that I am?"*

Can you say that His life brought beauty into this world?

Can you list some of the ways He did so?

Can your life bring beauty into the lives of people around you as you 'go about doing good'?

It certainly can! Not just because He lived ... but because of the **way** He lived His life.

Can you list some of the ways you can do so?

Let's Sum It Up ...

As we study this series of lessons, you will see some of the many ways you can become more like Jesus ... ways to be that kaleidoscope that brings beauty from things that are not so pretty ... by following the examples of Jesus which He demonstrated in every situation.

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!



THE LIFESTYLE OF JESUS

Text:

“And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, ‘He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak’.” Mark 7:37

Introduction:

What is so special about the way Jesus lived His life?

Have you ever been around someone that was simply “good”? You know ... someone who was kind, interested in others, genuine and sincere.

The setting of our text and the basis for our lesson finds Jesus venturing deep into Gentile territory ... the region of Decapolis.

Suggestion: Take a brief look at where this region is found on a Bible map.

We find some individuals bringing to Jesus a man with a double handicap ... he was deaf and he had some sort of speech impediment so that he could not talk.

Jesus takes him to the side, away from the crowd (Mark 7:33-35) and heals him immediately!

Can you imagine being the one experiencing this miracle at the hands of Jesus?
Can you imagine seeing the miracle performed before you own eyes?

Would you believe in Jesus more confidently if you could see a miracle performed today?

Warning: Be careful how you answer that last question because many people saw Jesus perform miracles ... but they chose not to believe in Him (John 12:37)!

After Jesus heals this man, the words of Mark 7:37 are spoken ... *“And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, ‘He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’”*

What is meant by the expression *“they were astonished beyond measure”*?

What astonished them? _____

What is meant by *“He has done all things well”*? _____

Let's take a closer look at the way in which Jesus lived while He was here on earth.

Let's Get Started ...

How did Jesus feel about pleasing His Father while living here on earth?

See John 6:38 _____

And how did God the Father feel about His Son pleasing Him while here on earth?

See Matt. 17:5 _____

Define the word lifestyle: _____

The Gospel of Mark presents Christ as a man of authority and power ... yet Mark describes by inspiration Christ's very simple lifestyle or manner of living. Read and discuss the following scriptures:

Mark 4:35-41 _____

Mark 6:1-3 _____

Reading from just these two examples, it becomes clear that Jesus Christ had an influence on other people's lives, didn't He!

Is it possible for each one of us to influence others in a positive way? _____

Discuss the relevance of Jesus' words recorded in Matthew 5:13-16.

The lifestyle of Jesus is so important for us to know for a number of reasons ...

1. Jesus asked people to follow Him!

Note the words recorded in Mark 1:17.

Did Jesus expect them to use their lives to lead others to God? _____

Also note the words recorded in Matthew 16:24

Doesn't it make sense that if someone asks us to follow them ... there should be a really good reason and not just a blind following on our part? _____

Define the term 'blind' following in light of the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 15:13-14.

We can safely follow the lifestyle of Jesus Christ in every way! See John 14:6.

2. Peter says we are to be pleasing to God!

Read and discuss the words of 1 Peter 2:21-24.

You see ... you never have to worry about being led down the wrong road or being led to the wrong course of action.

Isn't it so that some people who would like us to follow them ... do not have the best of intentions?

Can you give an example? _____

Isn't it so that some who would like us to follow them have good intentions, but they are wrong?

Can you give an example? _____

Consider and discuss the words of Solomon recorded in Proverbs 14:12.

3. Paul says we are to have the mind of Christ!

Read and discuss Philippians 2:5.

What exactly is the 'mind of Christ'? _____

Does the Lord really expect us to have the attitude of Christ in our own lives? _____

Is it really possible for us to have the same attitude of Christ in our own hearts and lives? _____ Note Philippians 2:3-4.

The follower of Christ must be diligent in their efforts to be more like Christ!

Read and discuss Philippians 1:20.

4. So we can grow up in Christ! Read Ephesians 4:15

What happens if the human body doesn't grow and develop? _____

What happens to plants and flowers if they don't grow and develop? _____

So what happens to our spiritual bodies when we don't grow and mature in Christ?

Could the Lord possibly be happy with us if we aren't growing and maturing in Him and His ways? _____

How happy is the Lord when we do not grow up in Him? _____

Read and discuss 1 Peter 2:1-2 and 2 Peter 3:17-18.

Hebrews 5:12-14 _____

Jesus Christ was perfect in every way! We are not! Hebrews 4:14-16; Romans 3:23

But He has demonstrated by His manner of life how we can become more like Him every day!

Make no mistake ... others are watching each of us whether we realize it or not ... so let's be encouraged to set the proper example for others to follow!

Let's Sum It Up ...

Following the lifestyle of Christ will never be easy ... but the rewards at the end of the journey will be more than worth anything it cost us here. See 2 Cor. 4:16-18.

Having the "*mind of Christ*" enables us to always take the high road that Jesus talks about in Matthew 7:12.

If our lifestyle imitates the lifestyle of Jesus, we will follow Jesus, be pleasing to God, have the mind of Christ, and grow up in the Lord!

Christ has left His footsteps forever recorded in God's Word for those who are willing to live, act, think, and choose to be just like Him!

Leave your own footsteps for someone else in this world to imitate and follow ... footsteps that lead to serving God and preparing for Heaven.

Live in such a way that by your obedience to God's will and His good grace you will hear on the Day of Judgment, "*Well done, good and faithful servant...*".

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!



Jesus Knew The Value Of Having Priorities!

Text:

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
Luke 19:10

Introduction:

What do you want to be and do with your life?

Do you want to be a person who makes a difference in other people's lives?

Do you want to be a person who makes a real difference in the world you live in?

God has given each one of us 24 hours a day to live life to the fullest! When you do the math ... that's 1,440 minutes, or 86,400 seconds ... every day!

Each of us can choose to live those hours, minutes and seconds the way we want to live them! We can live them for ourselves or we can choose to become more like our Savior and live them in a way that conforms to God's will!

You see ... the choice is ours to make! But we must not make that choice without realizing that we will be held accountable by our God for both the choices we make and how we act on those choices!

See Romans 14:12 and discuss the relevance of this passage to each of our lives.

Life on this earth is so short that we need to be making up our minds early in life to live by those principles that produce excellence rather than standards that only produce average or mediocre!

If you answered the questions asked at the beginning of this lesson in a way to suggest that you really do want to be a person who makes a difference, then understand that making a real difference involves more than being super intelligent or having good looks or lots of talent! It involves being in a right relationship with Jesus Christ!

Jesus would say of those who would make the choice to become one of His disciples (followers) that they were *“the salt of the earth ... and the light of the world”* (Matthew 5:13-16)!

In this lesson we want to take a closer look at the relevance of priorities in a person's life by noticing some events that took place in the life and ministry of Jesus Himself!

You see ... there was absolutely nothing haphazard about Christ's life or work while here on the earth! Everything was done for a purpose!

Let's Get Started ...

How important do you suppose it was for Jesus to have priorities?

Would pleasing His Father be one of those priorities?

Where on His list of priorities would the desire to please His Father be found?

The beauty of Jesus' example is that He demonstrated in His own life what He taught others to do! So, by looking at His actions and His word we can learn how He wants us to act and speak and live! What wonderful thoughts these are to consider!

Do you agree these are wonderful thoughts to consider?

Why or why not?

Let's turn to Luke 19:1-10 and consider an incident that occurred during the life of Christ which really highlights the significance of having priorities in one's life.

Discuss the scene as it is described by the writer Luke ...

Think about this event from the following perspectives:

1. The people who were present.
2. The religious leaders who were watching and listening.
3. Zacchaeus himself.

Now, discuss this event from Christ's perspective ...

Question: What do the words of Jesus to Zacchaeus mean in verse 5?

Answer: Jesus was telling this tax collector that it had been determined by Heaven for Him to go to his house that day! You see, Jesus was not out on a casual stroll through the city ... He was on a divine mission!

And that mission was to save the lost and please His Father!

What's Special About Christ's Life And Priorities?

The events that took place in Jericho with Zacchaeus are not the only time that Jesus talked about His purpose, His mission, His priorities!

Consider and discuss the following references:

Even before Jesus was born to Mary and Joseph, the angel announced that the coming of Jesus into the world involved a purpose!

Matthew 1:21 _____

While Jesus was still a boy, He asked Mary and Joseph this question reflecting priorities!

Luke 2:49 _____

In the famous Sermon on the Mount Jesus indicates His awareness of the priority of accomplishing exactly what His Father sent Him to earth to do!

Matthew 5:17 _____

Jesus was performing the will of the Father and received greater nourishment and satisfaction from this than from physical food!

John 4:34 _____

This statement truly sums up all that Jesus came to do and to accomplish!

Matthew 20:28 _____

Discuss the meaning of these three passages.

Matthew 16:21 _____

John 12:27-28 _____

John 18:37 _____

So, let's ask the question again: How much time do you suppose Jesus devoted to doing the will of His Father? (John 9:4)

Is there any connection between how much time we spend on various things and their place in our priorities list? Discuss.

If Jesus, the Son of God, recognized the need for priorities in His own life, doesn't it just make sense that we should be trying to do a better job of prioritizing things in our own lives?

When we read the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 6:19-21, 33, we should realize that setting priorities is something that God truly wants each one of us to be doing, even at an early age!

The ultimate priority/goal for each of us should be that of hearing the Lord say to us on the judgment day, *"well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord"* (Matthew 25:23)!

Would you agree or disagree with these thoughts? _____
Explain your answer. _____

We cannot earn our way into Heaven or in some way obligate the Lord to giving us Heaven because of anything that we have done to in some way merit Heaven! But we must be willing to follow the example of Christ who did the will of the Father as expressed in Hebrews 5:8, 9!

Let's Sum It Up ...

Jesus Christ has captured the attention of so many down through the centuries!

Even now, He captures not only the attention of the world, He captures the hearts and lives of some!

Has He captured your attention ... your interest ... your heart?

Has He become the Lord of your life?

The more that we come to know and understand about the life and character of Jesus Christ ... the more we should want to know Him! Knowing Him more will lead to becoming more like Him!

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!



Learning To Establish Priorities Like Jesus

Text:

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Matthew 6:33

Introduction:

What does the word “success” mean? _____

Is the world’s definition of success the same as your definition of success? _____

If not, how does your own definition differ?

Definitions to consider of what success is:

According to the dictionary:

“A degree or measure of succeeding; favorable or desired outcome; the attainment of wealth, favor or eminence” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online)

According to the world:

It might be in becoming a professional at whatever career one is seeking to obtain such as sports, musician, doctor, dentist, etc. It might be having worldly things, popularity, recognition, etc.

According to the Bible:

At the end of life hearing the Lord say to us, *“Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of heaven.”* Matt. 25:23

On which definition do you want to base your life?

It should be obvious to anyone who spends any amount of time in God’s Word that He is very interested in our successes in this life! He wants the very best for each one of us in every aspect of our lives!

Read and discuss Jeremiah 29:11-13...

God sees every one of us as being very important. He made a tremendous sacrifice when He sent His son to die on the Cross for each of us.

Read and discuss John 3:16 from a personal standpoint as it relates to your life.

You see, the sacrifice of Christ makes a relationship possible with God for each of us so that we can now be His children (Romans 8:15-17). And it is because of that sacrifice, His ideas for your success and for mine are most significant.

He wants us to have priorities just like His Son did!

Having seen the relevance of priorities in Jesus' own life ... let's turn our attention to getting the right priorities in each of our lives and seeing what this process can do to make our lives better and ultimately successful ... by God's standards!

Let's Get Started ...

If you were given the choice, would you choose to save time ... or money?

Note: You need to think about this question for a little bit.

Most people will focus on money ... on dollars and cents, rather than on how they are using their time!

In Luke 12:13-21 we hear the words of Jesus relating a parable about a wealthy man who ended up being called a "*fool*" by God because He didn't use his time or money to "*...become rich toward God.*"

The average person who lives to be 70 years old, will spend: 20 years sleeping ... 16 years working ... 7 years playing ... 6 years eating ... 5 years dressing (4-1/2 years for partially bald-headed men like me!) ... 3 years waiting for somebody ... 1-1/2 years in church ... 5 months tying shoes ... and who knows how many years on the telephone/cell phone/I-phone/Internet

We are encouraged to use our time wisely by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:15-17. Read and discuss the meaning of this passage with special attention being given to "*redeeming the time*" (v. 15).

The apostle Paul is telling us that our time here on earth should be lived in such a way that we can be looking for every opportunity to fulfill God's will!

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN LIFE GOALS ... GETTING THINGS STRAIGHT!

What are some goals you've set for yourself or would like to set for yourself?

God has some goals for you. Let's take a closer look at what He wants each of us to be and to do.

Look at the following verses and find at least one goal in each verse:

Romans 8:29 – 1 Goal _____

What does "*conformed*" mean? _____

Why would God want us to be like His Son? _____

Could it be this means that God wants the beauty of Jesus to be seen in each of us? Discuss.

Matthew 6:33 – 1 Goal _____

What does "*seek*" mean? _____

What does "*first*" mean? _____

Could this possibly mean that God wants first place in our lives? _____

Do you think He would be happy with second or third? _____

Why not? _____

Philippians 3:9, 10 – 1 Goal _____

What does the apostle Paul mean by "*being **found** in Him*"? _____

And what did he mean in v. 10 by saying "*that I **may** know Him*"? _____

Was Paul teaching here that we are to be more like Jesus? _____

If so, in what part of our lives? _____ Discuss.

A personal moment: Using the passage of Scripture we've just looked at, write a goal you would like to accomplish and attain in your life.

Think about that goal for a few minutes. If you are going to obtain it, what would be the necessary steps to take?

Step 1 _____
Step 2 _____
Step 3 _____

How do you suppose your life would change, or would it, if you started taking those steps?

Let's Sum It Up ...

What can you start doing with your time, **beginning today**, that will make a difference for good in your life?

What priorities could you start developing **today** to help you be more like Jesus?
List 5 of the most important priorities in **your** life. (Be honest!)

Why are these your priorities?
What makes them important to you?
Do you think God would be pleased with them?
Are we always honest in stating our priorities?

Why is it so difficult to put our priorities in their proper order?
Does it have anything to do with being selfish?
How about being worldly?

What is the most difficult priority for you to put in proper order? _____

Why? _____

Note: We all need to realize that each of us have different strengths, weaknesses and personalities, but regardless of what those are and of who we are ... **God expects us all to be like His Son!**

Jesus realized the value of having priorities. He knew what He needed to do with His life ... He knew what it would take to get it done ... and He was willing to make whatever sacrifice (including His own life) to accomplish what He needed to do!

You see, the entirety of Jesus' life was lived in a way to please His Father! And what a reward He received!!!

Here are some suggested priorities for each of us.

Make them yours **beginning today**:

- Learn more of God's will
- Talk with God daily
- Become a better family member in your house, better student in school, better friend to others
- Learn to serve others more
- Go to Heaven when this life is over!!!

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!

(see next page)

**USE THIS PAGE TO TRACK THE NUMBER OF HOURS
YOU SPEND DURING THE NEXT WEEK DOING THE FOLLOWING:**

1. TALKING ON THE PHONE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

2. USING THE INTERNET

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

3. SLEEPING

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

4. EATING

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

5. STUDYING SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

6. EXTRACURRICULAR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

7. TALKING TO GOD IN PRAYER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

8. LISTENING TO GOD THROUGH BIBLE STUDY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday



JESUS WAS MINDFUL OF OTHERS

Text:

“And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, ‘He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’ Mark 7:37

Introduction:

Mark, inspired writer of the Gospel of Mark gives us one of the best comments on the life and work of Christ in this passage. Most of us have the ability to do a few things well, some a number of things well ... but Jesus did everything well! Jesus never made a mistake, He never failed, never abandoned His mission!

When Jesus came to this earth and walked among men, there was something very unique and different about Him. You see, He was genuinely interested in other people ... their feelings, their problems, their trials and their needs.

But what really made Him unique and different was that He took the time to do something about it!

Note Peter’s statement about Jesus in Acts 10:38.

What is “*doing good*” anyway? _____

Do you see the beauty of Jesus in Peter’s description of Him in this passage?

Let’s look more closely at the life of Jesus and see the beauty of being mindful of others

What does it mean to have your mind full of something? _____

So what does that tell us about Jesus? _____

It was the practice of Jesus throughout His life to be mindful of others.

He was always mindful of His Heavenly Father.

He was mindful of His earthly parents, Joseph and Mary (Luke 2)

He was mindful of those around Him.

Jesus was just as mindful of good men as He was of sinful men ... as mindful of the rich as he was of the poor.

He was just as mindful of Nicodemus (John 3) as He was of the poor woman at the well. (John 4)

He was just as mindful of the rich tax collector named Zacchaeus as he was of the poor beggar in Jerusalem.

Jesus was mindful of the sick in heart, in flesh, and in emotion. He was moved to compassion ... Please read Matthew 11:1-6 (with emphasis on verses 4, 5) Matthew 9:36-38; 23:37; Mark 10:21 ...

Jesus was moved by the confusion in others' hearts and minds.

Jesus could not see men passing into the Judgment Day without telling them something about the great God in whose world they were living! Can we?? Please take time to read the words of Jesus recorded by Matthew in what is known as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7; Matthew 23)!

Whenever He saw men fainting and scattered abroad like sheep having no shepherd, His heart was moved with compassion!

Matthew 11:28-30

John 10: 1-18

He was thinking of others ... including you and me ... all of his life!

Read John 10:17-18

Now Read Matthew 4:1-11

Have you ever been tempted?
Have you ever gone without food or water?
Have you ever been hungry?
Can you imagine how hungry Jesus was at this time?
Why would He allow Satan to treat Him this way?

Every single temptation that Satan presented was rejected with a reason ... Jesus refused what Satan offered and told him why ... "*It is written...*" (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).

Jesus drew His strength from his Father ... God ... who is also our Father!

Was His mind full of self? (Philippians 2:5-11)

He was mindful of His Father, and He was mindful of others.

He suffered all things to show you and me that we can overcome any obstacle with this same strength.

Do you see the beauty Jesus displayed during this very ugly time of suffering?

Do you see bits and pieces of His beautiful life that you can incorporate into your own life to let others see Him in you?

Let's Get Started ...

How much time do you spend thinking about who you are and what you are?

How much time do you spend thinking about your own life?

Do you ever think about how you can become a better person?

Is this just something that adults are supposed to think about?

What about 10 year olds? 15 year olds or 18, 20 years old?

Isn't it really something **all of us** should do?

Were the people in Matthew 25:37-40 being other-person minded?

Please put the answer into your own words.

Were the people who really needed a drink, a meal, clothes, encouragement, etc., taken care of? _____

Were there some people who weren't taken care of? _____

Are there still people like this today? _____

Do you know someone who might fit into one of these categories? _____

Who is the most 'other-person' minded individual you know? _____

What impresses you about him or her? _____

Have you had someone do something out of kindness or concern for you in recent weeks? What was it? _____

How did it make you feel? _____

How do you suppose they felt? _____

Have you done any acts of kindness and concern for someone else in recent weeks? What was it? _____

How did it make them feel? _____

How did it make you feel? _____

Let's Sum It Up ...

It should be the desire of each and every one of us to live our lives after the example of the Perfect One, Jesus Christ! As a matter of fact ... this is actually the desire God has for each one of us! Please read the words of 1 Peter 2:21-25 ...

Read the words of the song O To Be Like Thee ...

O to be like Thee! Full of compassion,
Loving, forgiving, tender and kind,
Helping the helpless, Cheering the fainting,
Seeking the wandering sinner to find.
Oh, to be like Thee! Oh, to be like Thee
Blessed Redeemer, pure as Thou art!
Come in Thy sweetness, Come in Thy fullness;
Stamp Thine own image deep on my heart.

--- Thomas O. Chisholm

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!



LEARNING TO BE MORE MINDFUL OF OTHERS LIKE JESUS

Text:

“And He said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Luke 9:23

Introduction:

Who do you suppose is your own worst enemy?
Would it be someone at school? Someone in your neighborhood?
Would it be Satan?
How about your own self?

As strange as it may seem, your worst enemy is with you wherever you go...even when you go to Bible Class and Worship services!

He/she has sung hymns, read the Scriptures ... even bowed his/her head and prayed right along with you!

His/her name? **SELF!**

Read Romans 6:6 and discuss.

Very simply, we have all said some hard things to Self and even hated Self at times! While at other times, we tried to please and exalt and protect, yes even serve Self!

Selfishness is a common problem of all mankind ... young and old! Selfishness has an appetite, and it demands to be satisfied.

This is not incurable ... it can be treated.
And one of the best methods of treatment is to do for others!

Define selfishness in your own words:

Would you describe yourself as being a selfish person? _____
Have you been selfish in the last week? ____ Last day? ____ Last hour? ____
Is there anything wrong with feeling good about yourself? _____
Is there anything wrong with having a good healthy self-esteem? _____
Note Jesus' teaching in Matthew 22:39 and discuss.

What about loving self? Is it OK? _____

If so, in what sense? _____

James says the Bible is God's mirror (James 1:23-25). Explain what this means.

What is the image you see by looking into God's word?

Is the picture you see looking back at you one that you are happy about?

More importantly, is the picture you see looking back at you one that God is happy about?

Read Matthew 20:20-28

Why do you suppose the other disciples became upset? _____

How does Jesus say greatness is really measured? _____

Wasn't Jesus really saying we must learn to think about and serve others?

So, why don't we do a better job of thinking about and serving others? **Discuss.**

Jesus lived His life always mindful of others! The fact is ... the reason He even came to this earth was to demonstrate how God wanted us to live ... and to pay the ultimate price to make our salvation possible!

As we continue to turn the kaleidoscope of God's Word, looking at another aspect of the life of Jesus and what His expectations are of us ... let's take a close look at how we can learn to be more mindful of others.

Let's Get Started ...

There are two types of people in the world ... the "me-centered" "me-first" people and the others-centered people!

Which kind of a person are you really?

Place a mark on the line.

Me-Centered.....Others-Centered

Jesus made it very clear that in order for anyone to become one of His disciples that he/she would have to make the decision to put Him first. Just read the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 16:24-26 ...

On another occasion Jesus was asked “*Teacher, what is the great commandment in the law?*” (Matthew 22:36). When you read His answer in verses 37-39 ... you will discover that we must learn to be mindful of others!

Here are four points about being other-person minded:

1. Actions speak louder than words!

Read 1John 3:14-18

What is John really saying about our love for others? Are words enough?

Sometimes words are needed, but other times it's more than words ... it takes action! Was Jesus like this?

Name a few examples in the life of Jesus where He showed us how to be this kind of person.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What things can you begin doing today to be a more mindful of others individual?

List at least 5 things:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. Treat Others as being special!

Read Romans 12:10

What does Paul mean by saying “*love one another with brotherly affection*”?

One translation says “*outdo one another in showing honor*” (RSV).

What in the world does this mean?

Does it mean see who can do the most and get the most credit for doing it?

Or does it mean being completely committed to doing for others?

Discuss.

What can you begin doing today to treat others as being special?

Suggestion:

Name someone right here that you would like to do something special for ... not for selfish reasons ... but to make them feel loved and cared for._____.

3. Lose yourself in the service of others!

Read Luke 9:24

What does Jesus mean by losing your life in order to save it? _____

Save it from what? _____

Is this asking too much of us? _____

Complete this statement: I can become more mindful of others by _____

4. You are the only Jesus some people ever see!

Read Matthew 5:16

Isn't it true that some people never go to church, read the Bible or pray? _____

Isn't it also true that sometimes the only way they may ever discover the loving and forgiving power of Jesus is by seeing Him in your life? _____

That's why you're the only Jesus some folks have seen!

Choose one of the following to complete this statement:

When I hear the phrase, "You're the only Jesus somebody knows", I feel ...

____ Challenged

____ Overwhelmed

____ Scared

____ Excited that Christ is living in me

____ I've got a long way to go

Let's Sum It Up ...

1. The world influences many times by intimidation, abusive power and self-centeredness. That's really what Jesus was talking about with His disciples in Matthew 20:25-28.
2. But God's people ... you and me ... are not to operate this way! We are to live lives of service ... sacrificing ourselves for others.
3. Why? Because this is just what Jesus Christ did. Note what Paul writes in Philippians 2:3-4.
4. We must each one begin learning how to be selfless instead of selfish. And when we can learn and do that, we'll be letting the beauty of Jesus be seen in us!



Jesus Was A Servant In Every Way!

Text:

“And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Mark 10:44, 45

Introduction:

Each of the four gospels presents to the reader a different perspective of the character and life of the Lord, just as a kaleidoscope shows different views of the same colored glass!

Everything our Lord did, He did in service to His Father and for His fellow man! Everything!!

In fact, as many incidents of Jesus’ service as are recorded, the writer John tells us they couldn’t all be recorded in John 21:25! Think about that ...

What is a servant? _____

What does it mean to serve? _____

What does the word “imitate” mean? _____

Can we imitate the wrong people and practices? _____

How do we become better imitators of good people and practices?

The New Testament is absolutely full of information about the life of Jesus. It tells of His birth, life, actions, words, purpose, death, etc.

Have you ever wondered what Jesus had to say about Himself?

Only once in the New Testament do we hear from Jesus Himself about what He was like on the inside. Read Matthew 11:28-29.

Who are the weary and heavy-laden? _____

What do these terms mean? _____

What does the word “rest” mean? _____

What does the word “yoke” mean? _____

What does Jesus mean when He says He is “*meek and lowly*” (KJV) “*gentle and humble in heart*” (NASV) “*gentle and lowly in heart*” (NKJV)?

Couldn't He have said He was powerful? Or all-wise? Why didn't He?

“I am gentle” comes from a word that speaks of strength under control. It's the same word used to describe the taming of a wild horse. It is also a term that was used to describe an ointment used to take the sting out of an injury, cut or wound.

How strong is a wild horse?
Does the horse stop being strong?
What happens when a horse is tamed?

You see, Christ was strong, yet very much under control!
Wouldn't you like to be like this?
You can, you know. (2 Peter 1:5-11)

“I am ... humble.” This word carries the idea of “stooping low” and was often used to describe a household servant – someone who would stoop over the cooking or the serving of meals or the washing of clothes.

It has nothing to do with weakness, but someone who stoops low in order to serve another. And it was this same kind of true humility that Jesus demonstrated over and over that the apostle Paul held up as an example in Philippians 2:3-8!

So what is Jesus saying here? What is He telling us?

What Jesus is telling us, as He told His disciples, is that He wants each of us to become just like Him!

He wants us to be strong, not weak and spineless or unusable. He wants us to be readily available to meet the needs of others.

Who all would be included in the “others”?
Would it be our family? Our church where we worship? Our school?
Wouldn't it really be wherever there are others?

The beauty of Christ's example is that He always demonstrated in His own life what He taught others to do.

You see, He was the Perfect Example in every way! So, by looking at His example of the towel in John 13 we can learn another quality to help the beauty of Jesus be seen in us.

Let's Get Started ...

Jesus came to show us how... **How To Live Serving!**

The purposes for which our Lord came down from Heaven to this world are stated with great clarity in the Scriptures.

Please consider the following purposes and think about their significance for each one of us:

- The Scriptures tells us in Luke 19:10, *"for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*
That's you and me! Please read Romans 3:23 ...
- The Scriptures tell us in Luke 5:32, *"I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" and to "save them"* (1 Timothy 1:15).
You see, Jesus saw that those around Him (all of mankind) were actually spiritually "sick" patients ... patients who needed the help only the Great Physician could give! (Read Luke 5:31 and Matthew 9:13).
His diagnosis is **always** accurate ... His cure is **always** perfect and complete!
You and I ... are the patients who need to be healed ... healed of our sins!

Note: It is so tragic when sickness and disease kill the physical body ... but it is so much more tragic when sin condemns the soul to hell! See Romans 6:23.

What do all of these truths mean to you?

Are you taking these truths to heart?

Do they make you feel uncomfortable or guilty?

Or, do they make you happy if you are already serving and obeying Him?

What we all need to realize and never forget is this truth: The path of Jesus, His lifestyle, was a lifestyle of absolute, complete obedience to the Father!

It was the path of obedience that identified Him as the One whom Jehovah had said through the prophet Isaiah, *"Behold! My Servant whom I uphold ..."* (Isaiah 42:1).

Now, read the words of the apostle Paul recorded in Philippians 2:6, 7, *"who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men."*

Isn't this an amazing truth to consider?

Don't we have an amazing God?

Isn't Jesus, God's Son, amazing?

In our opening text of Mark 10:44, 45 we find some very interesting and challenging conversations. Conversations that were challenging for His apostles then ... words that are challenging for us today!

Conversations Between Jesus and His Apostles

The encounter of Jesus with the Son's of Thunder (James and John) is really charged with emotion.

Jesus announces to His 12 apostles that He is on His way to Jerusalem ... to die!
(Mark 10:23)

Jesus describes to the Twelve His betrayal and His ultimate execution in vivid detail
(Mark 10:34)

But in the middle of all this serious conversation, the real concern of James and John was the place cards at the Messianic banquet table!

They wanted places of pre-eminence!

They wanted Him to grant their request without any consideration! (Mark 10:35)

Ever been around someone like this? _____ Did it bother you? _____
Did this request of James and John bother the other apostles? _____

Jesus answers their question with a question in Mark 10:36 ...

Mark records their request in Mark 10:37.

Jesus then tells them they really don't know what they're asking for in Mark 10:38.

You see ... they wanted to be a part of all the glory associated with Jesus without even knowing or realizing the suffering and pain that preceded it!

Note: We will always do our friends a great favor by letting them know in advance there is a price to be paid!

So ... what would you tell your friends or others about that "price"?

See Matthew 16:24-26 ...

Jesus then tells them in Mark 10:39 that they would indeed die for His sake!

James would be killed by the sword at the hand of Herod (Acts 12) and John would be exiled to the island of Patmos (Revelation 1)!

Jesus then gives more information to the Twelve in Mark 10:41-45.

Life Lessons ...

Jesus teaches the Twelve and He teaches us ... if you want to do good things in His kingdom, the church, then they were to be servants! And so are we!!

Servants serve! In Bible times, a servant served meals, took care of the physical needs of those they served!

Greatness in God's eyes is achieved when His people meet the needs of others while doing His will! See Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 6:9, 10 ...

Make no mistake: Our model ... our example for the Lord's service ... is Jesus Christ, who *"did not come to be served, but to serve"* (Mark 10:45)!

Let's Sum It Up ...

The entirety of Jesus' life was that of obeying His Father! His death was the culmination of that obedience! (Hebrews 5:8, 9).

We need to be asking ourselves on a regular basis if this principle is true in our lives! If it is not ... if we lost our focus ... He is always ready to forgive us when we acknowledge our mistakes! (2 Peter 3:9).

It should be our premier desire to be like Jesus in every way!

The more we come to understand the beauty of Jesus' life ... the more we should be led to worship and adore Him!

Remember, He *"left us an example that we should follow His steps"* (1 Peter 2:21)!

O to be like Thee! Full of compassion,
Loving, forgiving, tender and kind,
Helping the helpless, Cheering the fainting,
Seeking the wandering sinner to find.
Oh, to be like Thee! Oh, to be like Thee,
Blessed Redeemer, pure as Thou art!
Come in Thy sweetness, Come in Thy fullness;
Stamp Thine own image deep on my heart.

- Thomas O. Chisholm

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!



Learning To Develop A Servant's Heart Like Jesus ...

Text: John 13:1-20

Introduction:

Without a doubt ... the greatest personal challenge for the person who truly wants to be like Christ ... is to become a Christ-like servant!

What makes it such a difficult challenge is because we usually want to do things our way and on our own schedule!

As the writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 12:1, 2 ... we must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Explain the meaning of "*looking unto Jesus* ..."

Have you ever watched a track meet?

Have you participated in a track meet?

Do you know why a runner is never to look back while running in the race?

The text in Hebrews 12 is saying we've got to keep our eyes on Jesus. Remember what happened to Peter in the boat during a storm? (Matthew 14:22-33)

One of the finest examples of our Lord's service is recorded in John 13.

The memory of what Jesus did ... of what He demonstrated ... of what He taught them that evening before His betrayal and crucifixion was never forgotten by them! Read Peter's words in 1 Peter 2:21-25; 1 Peter 4:7-10 ...

So ... the stage is set in John 13 for a truly remarkable series of events! Let's listen to the conversations recorded in this passage.

Caution: These words ... these events ... can change you forever!

So, as they say at Disney World, "let your adventure begin ..."

He came to show us how to live ... living is serving!

Let's Get Started ...

Read the entire text. (John 13: 1-20)

Why do you think Jesus washed His disciples' feet? _____

According to Jesus in John 13:17, what is the path of blessing for each of us?

Most of us do not start with an attitude of serving others. We usually start out by looking out for number one. How do we begin to make a change?

Answer: A towel must be put into action in order to be useful. What good is a towel if it just hangs there on the towel bar or lies folded on the table?

In the same way as putting a towel to use, you and I must begin to develop a servant's lifestyle patterned after the Perfect Servant – Jesus Christ!

There are four steps we can take to exchange selfish attitudes for attitudes of service.

Step #1: From Selfishness to Servanthood (John 13:1-5)

Luke 22:24 parallels the passage in John 13. In this scene the disciples are arguing.

What were they arguing about? _____

Do people do this today? _____ In the church? In our family? In school?

Do you ever do this? _____

Read Luke 22:24-38 and note some of their attitudes.

The bottom line is - they were being selfish.

How do we break out of this cycle of selfishness?

Note Matthew 16:24

Read John 13:1-5

John tells us what motivated Jesus' servant attitude. These same attitudes will help us become selfless servants and not selfish people!

- Develop a Right Relationship to God

From John 13:1, what can you discover about Jesus' relationship to God?

You see, Jesus was walking in a close relationship with His Father. He knew what His Father wanted of Him!

Can we walk in a close relationship with God? _____
Can we know what His will is for each of us? _____
How? _____

Note: Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:16; Psalms 19:7-9

- Develop a Right Relationship to People

Again, look at John 13:1. It says He loved them.

What does this mean that *“He loved them”*?
How does love relate to serving others?

You see, what Jesus did in washing His disciples’ feet illustrates the same thing that took Him to the cross – **LOVE**.

Jesus showed His love by washing their feet and then by dying on the cross to pay the price for their sins!

When you and I can begin to fully appreciate what Jesus did for us ... then we can begin to do for others! Discuss.

We cannot share with others what we do not have ourselves!

- Develop A Right Relationship to Self.

According to John 14:3, what did Jesus know about Himself?

Jesus knew who He was! He had a positive, healthy attitude about Himself.

Do you know who you are?

Have you thought about what you would like to become in terms of serving the Lord?

We can all feel good about who we are because we are children of the King!

Step #2: Go From Talking to Doing (John 13:4-5)

Jesus got up and did what no one else would do – He got up and bent down and served others!

Can you see yourself doing that?

Don’t we need to put our thoughts and ideas into action?

How many times have we intended on doing for others but never got around to it?

What can you do to serve someone in your life right now?

Who? _____ What? _____

Who? _____ What? _____

Who? _____ What? _____

Step #3: Move from Pride to Humility (John 13:6-10)

It's interesting that the roles of Peter and Jesus are almost reversed. Jesus has a right to be proud, but He is humble. Peter should be humble but he is proud! He refuses to let Jesus wash his feet.

What is pride? _____

Is there a good sense of pride? _____

Is there a bad sense of pride? _____

What does humility mean again? _____

You see, having humility means being able to give and receive!

Bend low to do for others ... and graciously allow others to do for you.

Step #4: Go From Fear to Freedom (John 13:12-17)

After Jesus had washed His disciples' feet, He sat down. It was time for reflection and instruction.

What question did He ask them? _____

Do you think they understood what He had really done? _____ Do you? _____

What does the statement in John 13:15 say to you about serving others?

Are we ever afraid to do for others? _____ Why? _____

Life Lessons ...

Give at least one example ...this requires action ... how can you:

Step #1: Go From Selfishness to Servanthood

Step #2: Go From Talking to Doing

Step #3: Move from Pride to Humility

Step #4: Go From Fear to Freedom

Let's Sum It Up ...

Most of us usually have one of two reactions to the idea of serving:

- #1 "If I serve others, I am sure they will take advantage of me."
- #2 "It's one thing to act like a servant sometimes, but it's something else when people treat you like a servant all the time."

If you have one of these reactions, then instead of serving by washing their feet, you may want to burn their feet with boiling water or freeze their feet with ice cold water!

Let's all ask the Lord to help us to realize **"yes, we now see what you did and we want to be more like you!"**

It's when we look at these qualities so perfectly exemplified in the life of Christ that we can see the beauty of serving others!

Let's all get around to serving ... when we can ... where we can ... how we can ... who we can!

Then and only then, will the beauty of Jesus be seen in us!



Jesus Was A True Friend In Every Way!

Text:

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.” John 15:13-15

Introduction:

The earthly life of Jesus Christ, “*God’s Beloved Son*” ... stands unique among all men who have walked upon this earth!

His life serves as **the pattern** for all who choose to be His disciples. (1 Peter 2:21)

Because these truths are so ... we cannot afford to just take a passing glance at His life! (John 20:30, 31)

It is our privilege ... our responsibility ... our opportunity to learn from the pages of God’s inspired Word (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) all that we can (2 Timothy 2:15)!

And then, it becomes our privilege ... our responsibility ... to apply these principles to our own lives! (Hebrews 5:8, 9)

Getting to know our Savior is a never-ending journey full of exciting truths ... challenging thoughts ... and a wonderful opportunity to become like Him (John 14:6)!

If that is not so for you, you need to spend more time reading the Bible!

So, as we turn the kaleidoscope and watch the different glass patterns develop ... we now come to take a closer look at the pattern of Jesus’ friendship!

Even as the psalmist wrote in Psalm 63:2 ... you see, there is no way that we can be casual about learning about Jesus Christ!

Let’s Get Started ...

There is a wonderful song in most hymnals entitled What A Friend We Have In Jesus. Do you recognize this song? Have you ever really thought about the words of this comforting song?

Note: You know when we are in worship services we really need to be thinking about the words we're singing!

Read Ephesians 5:19 and 1 Corinthians 14:15 ...

We need to understand one thing about looking to Jesus as a Friend ... we must realize that when Jesus left the joys of Heaven, came down to this earth, and walked among men ... He never lost sight of the fact that both His nature and relationship with His Father was His first allegiance and responsibility!

Very simply ... Jesus the Perfect Friend ... always stated this was so as He did in John 8:29, *"And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."*

Now that we have this truth principle clarified, consider the following truths about His friendship:

1. Jesus Considered Himself To Be A Friend!

Not only was He the Son of God, He considered Himself to be a Friend of mankind! The worst accusation the religious leaders who disliked Him so much could make against Him was that *"... He was a friend of sinners"* (Matthew 11:19)!

Actually, if you think about it, isn't this really a compliment?
Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Jesus addressed the crippled man who had been lowered down through the roof by his friends by saying, *"Friend, your sins are forgiven"* (Luke 5:18-20, NIV).

In our opening text of John 15:15, we find Jesus telling His disciples, *"No longer do I call you servants ... but I have called you friends ..."*

What did He mean by this statement?

Answer: He meant He could be our friend, but also an example of how to be a friend for us to see and know! Also read the words of 1 John 2:3-6 ...

There are three questions we need to ask:

What kind of a friend was Jesus?

What kind of a friend **should** we be to others?

What kind of a friend **are** we to others?

2. Jesus Truly Cared For His Friends!

When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane with Peter, James and John ... knowing that Judas was coming to betray Him with the soldiers ... He spoke the words recorded in John 18:8, 9 (emphasis on verse 8).

Even though He was about to be crucified ... He was looking out for His friends! What an amazing thought to consider!!

You see, Jesus was keeping His word ... He was keeping His promise recorded in Hebrews 13:5 *"I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

The song asks the question, 'Does Jesus care?' And the answer is, 'O, yes He cares, I know He cares. His heart is touched with my grief.'

Read Hebrews 2:17,18 and Hebrews 4:14-16 and think about these words ...

Oh, what a Savior we have in Jesus Christ!!

3. Jesus Is A Friend Who Always Stands On Truth!

Do you remember what Jesus said to His disciples in John 15:14? Well, go ahead and read these words again.

If you haven't had someone claiming to be your friend whose attitude seemed to be about having their way most if not all of the time ... someone claiming to be your friend who always wanted to talk more about themselves rather than listening to your ideas, concerns, etc. ... you will!

And they're just not that much fun to be around, are they?

Jesus was never like this kind of a person! Never!! (Read John 15:14 again).

Jesus realized the real need for every friendship to be based upon what is right!

We're talking about what is right, demonstrated in God the Father and by His Son, Jesus Christ!

God's character is one that is trustworthy! Our God is pure ... He is just ... He is holy!

Our God is slow to anger ... He is so patient ... and He is always motivated by love because He is love (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8)!

Jesus wanted His disciples then and He wants us now to both possess and demonstrate these traits! Just read the words ... slowly ... recorded in John 15:12, *"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

What should all of this information mean to us?

What does Jesus want us to learn from these truths?

What does all of this information actually mean to you, personally?

Read John 13:34, 35 and 1 John 2:7-11 ...

Are you starting to understand what kind of a genuine friend Jesus is? I sure hope so ... because the rest of your life will be spent either obeying these commands or disobeying them! You alone must make the call in your life!

Let's Sum It Up ...

There is so much more we could think about regarding the friendship of Jesus that the words expressed by the writer John in John 21:24, 25 really apply! *"This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen."*

Jesus teaches us to be very careful with our time. You see, we can all get so busy with crowded schedules, so many obligations ... that we are too busy to be friendly and caring to others!

Are you ever this busy?

Do you want to continue being this way?

It's time for all of us to make the decision to be more like Jesus in every way!

If you have not applied the truths of Romans 5:8 to your own life and your very real need to obey Him ... don't put it off!

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!



Learning To Demonstrate The True Meaning Of Friendship

Text:

“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24

Introduction:

The wisest man to live on the earth was Jesus Christ! Next was the third king of Israel named Solomon. He writes by inspiration in this passage of Scripture that the person who decides to make friends with someone too quickly and isn't careful about having a friendship with others will do so to his own destruction!

You see ... Solomon is advising us of the truth that when we are careful and show wisdom in choosing friends ... we will find out the wisely chosen friends can actually become more loyal to us than even family! Think about that for a few minutes.

The word for *“friend”* used by Solomon is a strong word meaning ‘one who loves’ and is a term used by Moses to describe Abraham who is spoken of as being “a friend of God.” (2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8)

Turn and read the words of Proverbs 17:17 ...

Again, Solomon is really instructing us as to the difference between someone who is a friend and someone who might just be a relative ... but don't misunderstand that a family member can't be your friend as well!

Solomon is simply letting us know that a true friend can be viewed as a constant source of love. Friends ... real friends ... are closer than a brother because they are available all the time ... not just in the time of a crisis!

Those are pretty good thoughts to be thinking about when thinking about having a friend or being a friend ... aren't they?

God said after creating this world and everything in it, *“it is not good that man should live alone”* (Genesis 2:18).

This principle is still just as true as it was *“in the beginning”* (Genesis 1:1)!

Man ... woman ... child ... all need to have a friend! And even the world understands this to be so! Consider the following uninspired quotes on friends:

'A friend is one who multiplies joy and divides grief.'

'A friend is one who understands my silence.'

'If you really wanna know who your friends are, make a big mistake.'

Can you imagine trying to go through this life without having close friends?
What do you think that would really be like?

Now, can you imagine trying to go through this life without Jesus Christ? Think about this ... Let's talk about this for a moment ...

Dealing with the temptations to sin we face daily ... struggling, yes, struggling with the burden of sin and a guilty conscience ... all by ourselves ... can you imagine?

Dealing with sickness and even death of a loved one or friend ... without encouragement and comfort ... all by ourselves ... can you imagine?

Very simply ... without the friendship of others ... but most especially without the love and friendship of Christ ... life will overwhelm us!

Think with me ... what would our life be like if you had to deal with pain and disappointment without the help of close friends? Having no one to hold our hand ... no one to strengthen and encourage us when we're down ... would be more than most of us could bear!

Friends ... well ... they can be such a wonderful part of life! They can be the people we talk with about our most favorite things. They can be the people we do our most favorite things with! Good friends ... even best friends ... can be the people who probably influence us the most except for our family and our God!
God does influence you, doesn't He?

Do you have a friend ... friends?
Are you a friend to someone else?

Friends ... they can be so good for us ... and they can also be so bad for us!

As we turn the kaleidoscope of God's Word one more turn we learn the Bible really has a great deal to say about friends and friendship ...

Let's Get Started ...

In Matthew 11:19 it was said of Jesus that he was "... *a friend of sinners.*"

What did Jesus do to be considered a friend of sinners?

What is a friend anyway?

There are so many different kinds and even levels of friendship ...

Webster's Dictionary says that a friend is one who desires to entertain another's pleasure. Webster also says a friend is one who holds another in high esteem, respect, and affection; a friend is one whose happiness and prosperity you desire to promote. Jesus says, *"You are my friends, if you do whatever I command you."* (John 15:14)

How did Jesus treat other people?

Can we learn from Jesus, in how He treated others, how we should treat others?

Do we need to know these things?

Just how important is it to treat other people as He did?

Read Matthew 7:12. This has come to be known as the "golden rule".

What did Jesus mean by these words? _____

Does anyone really like to be mistreated or spoken to badly _____

Did Jesus practice what He preached _____

Did others always treat Him in the same way? _____

Did their unkindness prevent Him from continuing to be good? _____

Do the unkind things said and done to us ever influence us to stop doing good?

Discuss.

Friendship with God (text) is the most priceless objective to have in life. Many young people have the mistaken idea that their junior high and high school friends will be friends for life. The fact is ... that's not usually true!

But a friendship with Jesus Christ (text) can last for eternity. When young people, as well as older people, can learn that Jesus offers His friendship to them ... they will never have to be friendless again.

It is when you and I discover through the life of Jesus what friendship is all about ... of how He treated others ... cared for others ... encouraged others ... was willing to sacrifice for others ... was patient and forgiving with others ... that we learn more of the beauty of His life and how those same sterling qualities can be seen in us.

Let's Take A Closer Look...

There are few things in life as important or as wonderful as real friendship. A good friend is a treasure to cherish!

What is a real friend _____

Can there be bad friendships? _____

How can these bad friendships be trouble? _____

Note 1 Corinthians 15:33.

Also read Proverbs 13:20; 22:24; 23:20.

Take a moment and reflect on your friendships.

List three people you consider to be your friends. Why are they your friends?

1. _____ Why? _____
2. _____ Why? _____
3. _____ Why? _____

Now list the names of three people with whom you would like to become better friends. Why?

1. _____ Why? _____
2. _____ Why? _____
3. _____ Why? _____

Now answer the following questions:

How many friends do you have? _____ Lots ... a few ... one or two?

Who would consider you to be one of their friends? _____

List three qualities you have that make you a good friend.

1. _____ Why? _____
2. _____ Why? _____
3. _____ Why? _____

What qualities does your best friend have? _____

Are your parents your friends? _____

Why or why not? _____

Do you have more or fewer friends than you had one year ago? _____

Are you a good friend? _____ Why? _____

A True Friend

A true friend is ... caring and available ... encouraging ... willing to sacrifice ... patient and forgiving. At first glance, which of these qualities are your greatest strengths in a friendship?

Do you consider any one of these to be more important than the others?

Which ones? _____

Why? _____

Caring and Available

Read the following passages and explain in the space provided how each relates to being a friend who deeply cares and is willing to be available to a friend in need.

Romans 12:15 _____

Proverbs 17:17 _____

Galatians 6:2 _____

Which of your friends could use an extra dose of caring from you?

What can you do to show them you care?

What can you do to show them you are there for them?

Encouraging

In the Old Testament, the friendship of David and Jonathan stands out as one of the great examples of real friendship.

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 23:14-18

What can you learn from this friendship for your own benefit?

Does being a good friend to others mean being critical, saying unkind things about them, etc? _____

Does being a good friend mean waiting for them to come to you first? _____

Would your friends call you an encouraging person? Or would they call you a discouraging person?

List three specific ways in which you can be more of an encouragement to your friends.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Willing to Sacrifice

Read John 15:13 again.

What is your reaction to this scripture?

Does it overwhelm you? Impress you? Puzzle you? Inspire you?

Is this quality a strength or a weakness in your life?

If it's a weakness, how can you become more sacrificial?

What are little everyday sacrifices that we can do to deepen a friendship?
Do you see a relationship between this principle and the friendship you have with the Lord? You are a friend of God aren't you? If not, you sure need to be!

Patient and Forgiving

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4 "*love is patient*"

What is patience? _____

Why would patience be necessary in a friendship? _____

How patient is Jesus with us? _____

Could you be a little more patient with others beginning today? _____

Read Luke 23:24

How forgiving was Jesus throughout His life? _____

Aren't we supposed to be forgiving, as He is? (Matthew 6:12) _____

Can we expect forgiveness if we don't extend it to others? _____

Let's Sum It Up ...

Yes, Jesus wants to be our friend, but friendship requires things that many are just not willing to do.

We must all seek to be a friend of Jesus by doing His will!
And a part of that will includes how we treat others.

REMEMBER ...

the greatest gift any friend could give or receive would bring one closer to spending eternity with Jesus in His heavenly home under the loving care of our Father!

So, does the room light up with His beauty when you come into it?
Or, does the room light up when you leave it?

**Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His
character to shine in our own hearts and lives!**



Learning To Become A Person of Real Integrity Like Jesus!

Text:

“So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart ...”
Psalms 78:72; “Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness...” 1 Kings 9:4; “Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.” Matthew 5:8

Introduction:

What does the word *“integrity”* mean?

Do the words “honesty and purity” mean anything to you? What?

What about honorableness?

What is a hypocrite? _____

Ever know one? _____

Ever been one? _____

The Bible says that David shepherded his people with integrity of heart and led them with skillful hands.

Integrity of heart is living according to God’s principles in everything you do!

It is living on the outside who God is making you on the inside.

We’re talking about demonstrating daily our walk with God!

Wouldn’t you like to do that before others throughout your life?

If not, why not.

It was said of Jesus in Luke 2:52 that He *“increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”*

What does it mean He increased *“in wisdom and stature”*?

How did He increase in favor with God, His Heavenly Father?

How did He increase in favor with man?

Doesn’t this mean you can begin serving and bring honor to God right now in your own life?

Who keeps telling you “Don’t hurry, you’ve got plenty of time to serve Him”?

It’s not the Lord!

When you look into the life of Jesus, one of the beautiful things you see is that Jesus was who He said He was ... not pretending ... not play acting ... He was genuine ... He was for real!

The great thing about this is ... we can be too!

Let's look more closely at this quality of integrity as we take another glance into the kaleidoscope of God's Word ...

Let's Get Started ...

Let me tell you something very important ... one of the greatest compliments you could ever be paid is to be called a person of integrity ... someone who is honest ... someone who is striving to live right!

Can people of integrity be trusted?
Are people of integrity honest?
Do people of integrity have pure motives?
Are there really people like this in the world?
You bet ... they're called God's people!

Let's look at two people in the Old Testament who were young people of integrity.

Daniel

Read Daniel 6:1-23

Reading Daniel 6:3, why was Daniel distinguished above all other leaders?

What happened when Daniel's enemies tried to find fault in him? (v.4)

What did Daniel do after King Darius signed the document? (v 10)

What were the results of Daniel's integrity and faithfulness to God? (vs 19-24)

What will the results be for us if we remain faithful to the Lord?

Joseph

Read Genesis 39:1-23

Why did Potiphar leave Joseph in charge of everything in his house and field? (vs 1-6)

What does this tell us about Joseph?

Wouldn't you like to be like Joseph?

What was Joseph's response to the plea of his master's wife? (vs 11, 12)

Why do you suppose Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph? (vs 13-18)

How did Joseph act in prison? (vs 19-23)

Did he feel sorry for himself? _____

Did he blame God? _____

Did he quit serving God? _____

What was God's response to Joseph's integrity? (v 21)

How does God feel toward us when we are faithful to Him?

Note 1 Corinthians 10:13

Please remember that as good as these Bible characters were ... they still sinned and were in need of a Savior! Read the words of Romans 3:23 ...

Some Things To Think About

I want you to take a personal inventory. List the areas in your life where you are lacking in integrity. Then beside each one, make a note of how you can improve this quality in your life.

<u>CHARACTERISTIC</u>	<u>HOW TO IMPROVE IT</u>
1. Gossip	Learn to speak carefully and kindly of others. <u>Ephesians 4:29-32</u>
2. _____	_____ _____ _____
3. _____	_____ _____ _____
4. _____	_____ _____ _____
5. _____	_____ _____ _____

Now, write out your own definition of integrity.

Why is it so difficult to find people of integrity?

Answer: Because so many are so selfish and proud!

Read 1 John 1:6

Would you consider this type of person a person of integrity? _____

Why or why not? _____

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest, how would you honestly rate yourself in these traits of integrity:

_____	Honesty
_____	Purity
_____	Wisdom

Please read the following passages concerning each of the above traits and decide you're going to work at having all 10's before long:

Honesty

According to Colossians 3:9, 10, why should we not lie to one another?

How does Luke 6:31 reflect the idea of living honestly?

Reading from Hebrews 4:13, why is it useless to try to deceive God?

Do you really want to be honest? You can if you really want to!

Purity

What does Jesus say about the pure in heart in Matthew 5:8?

How did Paul describe those who practice impurity in Ephesians 4:18, 19?

What suggestions does Paul give us in Galatians 5:16 and 2 Timothy 2:22 on how to live a pure life?

Do you really want to live a pure life? You can if you really want to!

Wisdom

Reading from Proverbs 2:15, what are some of the rewards for seeking wisdom? (look at v 6)

What can you do personally to develop the characteristic of wisdom in your own life?

A good suggestion would be to start with Proverbs 1:6 ...

Do you really want to walk uprightly, to grow in wisdom? You can if you really want to!

Let's Sum It Up ...

David led his people with integrity.

Jesus, the Great Shepherd leads those today who choose to follow Him and obey Him with integrity.

He can and will do everything He has promised to do.

Note John 14:1-6 ...

Throughout His life on earth, Jesus exemplified the life and character of one striving to please the Father!

The beauty of Jesus is seen in His willingness to do and be all that the Father wanted Him to do and be. (Hebrews 5:8, 9)

You see ... Jesus understood everything about obedience completely!

When we can arrive at the place in life where this is the most important concern in our lives ... then the beauty of Jesus can be seen in each of us ... and then we can be known as people of integrity!

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!



Following The Life Of Jesus ... Will Lead You To Heaven!

Text:

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” John 14:6

Introduction:

Please read John 14:1-6 ...

There is a question that is often asked of young people, “who do you want to be or be like when you grow up?”

Have you ever been asked this question?

What was your answer? _____

If you are anything like I was when I was young, your answer will usually change over time.

Perhaps, this is a question we all need to be asking ourselves regardless of age, “So, who would you want to be or be like **spiritually** as you grow up?”

The child of God ... the Christian ... ought to be becoming more like Jesus **every** day! Read the words of Philippians 1:20 ...

We have been studying the Beauty Of Jesus’ character. Exhaustive? No way! Informative? Hopefully! Challenging? Absolutely!

Jesus Christ walked on this earth for some thirty plus years. He wasn’t ever wealthy or famous ... but His words, works and life continue to influence many long after His initial enemies have died and been buried!

Jesus is not remembered for what He had ... but for what He did!

As we come to the last lesson in this series ... we want to give the kaleidoscope of God’s Word one last turn ... as we continue to realize that **Following The Life Of Jesus ... Will Lead Us To Heaven!**

Let's Get Started ...

The life of every person ... the lifestyle of every person is important!

The lifestyle of Jesus is so important for a number of reasons ... too many to study in one series of lessons! Here are a few to consider ...

Number One: The fact is ... Jesus asked us to follow Him!
Matthew 11:28-30 ... He wants us to come and learn of Him!
Mark 1:17 ... Jesus used this phrase "*follow Me*" frequently during His earthly ministry!
Take a look sometime at the references in the four gospels where He uses this phrase ...
If we ask someone to follow us ... we need to give a good example/reason in our own life as to why ...
We can safely follow the life and example of Jesus without any fear or reservation of being misled or deceived!

Number Two: The apostle Peter taught the early Christians and he has taught us ... we are to follow Jesus (1 Peter 2:21)!
There is no disappointment to be found when we choose ... to follow Him!

Number Three: The apostle Paul teaches us that we are to have "*the mind of Christ*" (Philippians 2:5) even as he charged the church at Philippi!
You see ... we must learn all we can about the mind of Christ in order to know how we are to live ... and in order to know what God's expectations are of each one of us!

The name "*Christian*" (Acts 11:29; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16) should really say it all!

As you and I grow up in Christ ... as we mature in our knowledge, faith and service ... other people will take notice of us!

Look at the words of Acts 4:12-13 ...

Make no mistake about it ... Jesus is the **only** Person who has or ever will live on this earth who can get us to Heaven!

Now, read the words of Matthew 1:21 where the angel said, "*And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*"

How can we not be "*giving thanks always*" for who He is and for what He has done ... for each and every one of us!

Jesus is for real ... in every way and all of the time!

The way He lived ... He **always** lived to please the Father! This was His priority!

The way He served mankind ... He **always** lived to help mankind live better!

The way He lived ... He was **always** mindful of others and their needs! It could be someone like Nicodemus who needed to know what truth was (John 3:1-21) ... or the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:1-26 who needed compassion and direction in her life.

The way He lived ... He knew His purpose was that expressed in Luke 19:10.

The way He lived ... He was consistent in what He taught and in what He practiced!

The way Jesus lived ... He was courageous in every way! He never backed down from His enemies ... even death itself!

The way He lived ... He never once compromised the Truth!

Jesus has demonstrated for us how to live balanced lives! He taught us by His own example of the need to work and rest and relax!

Read the following passages of Scripture: Mark 3:13; 4:38; 6:31.

Jesus has demonstrated for us the very real need to pray!

Read the following passages of Scripture: Mark 1:35; 6:46; 14:32-36.

You see ... Jesus knew that He needed to talk with His Father!

Jesus showed us that He could not ... and would not ... live without daily prayer!

Let's all ask ourselves the following questions:

Are we honestly patterning our lives after the Perfect example of Christ?

Are we truly spending time studying God's Word to learn more about Him?

Do you ever ask yourself before making a choice or a decision, "what would Jesus do in this situation?"

Does your life show to others that Jesus Christ is **first** in your life?

Let's Sum It Up ...

Jesus lived! Jesus died! Jesus was buried in the tomb! Jesus rose from the grave! Jesus ascended up to Heaven! And Jesus is coming again!

The real question we need to be asking ourselves is, "will we be ready for His coming?"

Please read the moving words of appeal recorded in 2 Peter 3:10-14.

So ... who do you want to be like spiritually?

May each one of us be challenged and encouraged to spend more time thoughtfully and prayerfully looking at the life and example of Jesus Christ ... and decide to be more like Him ... **in every way!**

We need to be living in anticipation of the Lord's coming with reverence and fear ... demonstrating the value of finding, knowing and serving the Lord! It is in fact the principle of "*light and salt*" that Jesus talked about in Matthew 5:13-16!

Then ... when life on earth is over ... we should want to hear Him say, "*Well done, good and faithful servant*" ... because that's where following Him will lead us! "*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*" (John 14:6). Amen!!!

Are you familiar with the words to the following song entitled At The Cross?

"Alas, and did my Savior bleed, And did my Sovereign die;
Would He devote that sacred head For such a one as I?
Was it for crimes that I have done, He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown! And love beyond degree!
Well might the sun in darkness hide, And shut His glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died For man the creature's sin.
But drops of grief can ne'er repay The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'Tis all that I can do!"

■ Isaac Watts, 1707

Life's greatest challenge ... being a Christ-like servant ... can become life's greatest reward for the committed, dedicated and faithful servant!

Becoming more like Jesus will help us to allow the beauty of His character to shine in our own hearts and lives!