

DISCIPLESHIP. LESSON 6

1	PRAYER
----------	--------

Pray for God’s guidance through his Spirit, for awareness of his presence and for listening to his voice. Dedicate this lesson about disciple making to the Lord.

2	SHARING (20 minutes) <i>[QUIET TIMES]</i> MATTHEW 18:21 – 21:46
----------	--

Take turns and **share (or read)** from your notes) in short what you have learned from one of your quiet times out of the assigned Bible passages (Matthew 18:21 – 21:46). Listen to the person sharing, take him serious and accept him. Do not discuss what he shares.

3	MEMORISATION (20 minutes) <i>[ASSURANCES]</i> (3) 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13
----------	--

A. MOTIVATION

Read Matthew 19:3-6; Luke 10:25-26.

Discover and discuss. Why is it important to memorise Bible verses (passages or chapters)?

Notes. Memorised Bible verses will enable you to give God’s answers to man’s questions.

B. MEDITATION

(3)

Write the following memorisation verse on a white or blackboard as follows:

Assurance of victory 1 Corinthians 10:13	
No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. 1 Corinthians 10:13	1 Corinthians 10:13

1. A temptation can be a trial at the same time.

The original word (Greek: peirasmos) can be translated as “temptation” or “trial”. A trial (test) is something God designs to make you stronger and wiser and always builds you up (James 1:2-4,12). But a temptation is something that is designed to cause you to sin and always pulls your life down into defeat.

The source of temptations can be your own sinful nature (James 1:13-15), the sinful world around you (1 John 2:15-17) or the devil (Luke 4:1-13). The context (1 Corinthians 10:6-11) speaks clearly of temptations, like: idolatry, pagan revelry, sexual immorality and grumbling against God. Nevertheless, God is so powerful that he can change a temptation to do evil into a trial (test) to do good! All depends on how you respond to the temptation.

2. The nature of temptations or trials.

The same kind of temptations tempts all people. Everybody can recognise a temptation, because it occurs all over the world and because it occurs again and again throughout history.

3. God's faithfulness when you are tempted.

God never allows any temptation to be bigger than our ability to overcome that temptation! God is bigger than our temptations and he is also fair. He never allows us to be tempted above our ability to resist the temptation. And God always gives us a way of escape out of the temptation!

God never leads people into temptation to sin (James 1:13), but he may allow a temptation by your sinful nature, the godless world or Satan to take place! When we pray, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:13), we ask God to intervene in a sovereign way and not permit us to do what we are prone to do by nature. Whenever we rely on God and pray, “Please do not permit me to run into tempting situations”, then God will deliver us out of that evil situation (Matthew 6:13).

Why does God allow us to be tempted? The devil, the sinful world or the sinful nature may try to use a temptation to sin to break us down, but God can use that same temptation to sin to build us up! A particular event may be a temptation from the devil's point of view, but from God's point of view it is always a trial (test)(cf. Job chapter 1).

God can allow you to be tempted by sin as a test (trial), without desiring that you fail the test. In such a situation, you could pray, "Lord, give me your grace not to fail your test (trial)!" For example, God permitted the devil to tempt Job to the utmost, but Job relied on God and became a stronger and more mature man in the end.

God can also permit somebody to follow his sinful nature and fall into temptation. God has the right not to intervene. Especially people, who do not pray and therefore are not dependent on God, can also not rely on God's faithfulness (James 4:2). The temptation will be too strong for them and they will not find any way of escape out of the temptation. For example, when people suppress the truth or exchange the truth for a lie, then God may give them over to the sinful desires of their hearts (Romans 1:24-25). Without God, nobody can overcome the power of sin!

4. Practical ways to escape temptations.

- **Genesis 39:9-10.** Immediately say "No!" Refuse seductive suggestions and evil plots (John 8:3-8).
- **Genesis 39:12.** Flee away from the source of temptation. You must always flee from the following temptations: sexual immorality (Proverbs 4:14-15,23-27; 5:1-23; 1 Corinthians 6:18), idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:14), the love of money (1 Timothy 6:9-11) and the evil desires of youth (2 Timothy 2:22; cf. 1 Peter 4:3-4).
- **Psalm 119:9,11.** Immediately begin to think God's thoughts. Memorise Bible verses and use them, especially when you are confronted impure thoughts or with lies and negative thoughts (Ephesians 6:16).
- **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10.** Immediately seek the fellowship of another Christian and help one another to remain standing.
- **Matthew 26:41.** Watch and pray, especially when you are tired or have spiritual battles.
- **Luke 6:27-28.** Immediately respond with positive Christian ministry (Matthew 5:38-42). Do something positive with your hands or serve someone (John 8:3-11).
- **Acts 16:18.** Use your spiritual authority and command the evil one to go away in the name of Jesus Christ (cf. Matthew 4:3-4).
- **1 Timothy 6:9.** Avoid wrong ambitions and wrong habits (Job 31:1).
- **James 4:7-8.** Immediately submit yourself to God (cf. Hebrews 2:18). Immediately come near to God and pray (Matthew 7:7-11). Then resist the devil and he will flee from you (1 Peter 5:8-9).

C. MEMORISATION AND REVIEW

1. Write. Write the Bible verse on a blank card or on one page of your small notebook.
2. Memorise. Memorise the Bible verse in the right way. (3) Assurance of victory: 1 Corinthians 10:13.
3. Review. Divide into twos and review the first two memorised Bible verses.

4	BIBLE STUDY (70 minutes) <i>[QUESTIONS ABOUT LIFE]</i> (3) WHO AM I? EPHESIANS 2:1-22
----------	--

Make use of the five steps method of Bible study to study Ephesians 2:1-22 together.

STEP 1. READ.	GOD'S WORD
<i>Read.</i> LET US READ Ephesians 2:1-22 together. Let us take turns to read one verse each until we have completed the reading.	

STEP 2. DISCOVER.	OBSERVATIONS
<i>Consider.</i> WHICH TRUTH IN THIS PASSAGE IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU? Or WHICH TRUTH IN THIS PASSAGE TOUCHES YOUR MIND OR HEART? <i>Record.</i> Discover one or two truths that you understand. Think about them and write your thoughts in your notebook. <i>Share.</i> (After the group members have had about two minutes to think and write, take turns to share). Let us take turns to share with one another what each of us has discovered. (The following are examples of people sharing what they have discovered. Remember: In every small group, the group members will share different things, not necessarily these things)	

2:8-9

Discovery 1. I have been saved by God's grace and not by anything I have done!

Before I accepted Jesus Christ into my heart and life, I believed that I should perform all my religious duties every day and also do many good works in order to please God. I thought that if I did all these things, maybe God would make my life prosperous and successful on earth and after death accept me into Paradise. I regarded my relationship to God as a kind of contract relationship: if I do something for God, then he must do something for me!

The God who revealed himself in the Bible saves me only by what he in his grace does for me and not by anything I do for him! I realised that God's work of salvation for me is perfect and complete, even though all my own efforts remained imperfect! I began to realise that true salvation is a complete free gift and can never be bought or earned!

2:18

Discovery 2. I actually have access to the living God!

Many people say that God is so great, that no one can know him personally, talk to him personally or walk with him personally. Other people wish they could have personal contact with God. But no matter how hard they try, they never experience any contact with God. Because they do not hear his words or see his works, they think that God does not exist.

But the Bible says that I can see God's work in his creation (Romans 1:19-20), I can hear his voice in the Bible (Romans 10:17) and in my heart (Romans 2:14-15), and I can experience his blessings and care for me in my circumstances (Acts 14:17). The message of the Bible is proclaimed world-wide so that no one can make any excuse (Romans 3:19-20).

The Bible says that there is one genuine way to make contact with the living God. That way is Jesus Christ! God lives in a place full of light, which no man can approach (1 Timothy 6:16)! No one can barge into God's presence. No one can approach God by himself!

However, God wants to and can come close to people! Without discarding his divine nature, he took on the human nature and entered his creation and human history (John 11,14; Philippians 2:5-8). God made himself visible and approachable in Jesus Christ!

God did everything that is necessary for my salvation. He gave Jesus Christ as a sacrifice that made atonement for all my sins! I believe this good news and have accepted it (John 1:12-13). God has changed me! He has justified (saved) me from damnation (Romans 5:8-10). As security he has given me his Holy Spirit to live in my body. By this he guarantees that at his second coming he will complete the salvation he has already begun (1 John 3:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:26; Philippians 3:21).

It is the Spirit of Jesus Christ that brings me into contact with God. The Spirit of Jesus Christ reveals God to me and helps me to have fellowship with God. The Spirit of Jesus Christ lives in me and makes me experience the reality of God, the presence of God and the nearness of God! Through the Spirit of Jesus Christ I have access into the presence of God. In God's presence I can hear him speaking to me personally, I can speak to him personally and I can live my life in a personal relationship with him. And through the Spirit he can live the new life in and through me!

STEP 3. QUESTION.

EXPLANATIONS

Consider. WHICH QUESTION ABOUT ANYTHING IN THIS PASSAGE WOULD YOU LIKE TO ASK TO THIS GROUP?

Let us try to understand all the truths in Ephesians 2:1-22 and ask questions about the things we still do not understand.

Record. Formulate your question as clearly as possible. Then write your question in your notebook.

Share. (After the group members have had about two minutes to think and write, let each person first share his question.)

Discuss. (Then, choose a few of these questions and try to answer them by discussing them together in your group.)

(The following are examples of questions the students might ask and some notes about the discussion of the questions.)

2:1

Question 1. What is the meaning of being "dead in my trespasses and sins"?

Notes. This verse describes who I was before I believed in Jesus Christ. Without Jesus Christ, I was "physically alive", but "spiritually dead". Of course, I could eat, drink, work and sleep, but the spirit inside me was "dead". The function of the human spirit is to know God personally and to have a personal relationship with God.

Why does God call a non-Christian "dead" even though he has moral values and does good works? A non-Christian can have moral values and can do good works, because he still is a creation of the Living God! God gave him these abilities, even if he does not acknowledge that. However, the non-Christian does not do his good works for the sake of God or in dependence of God. He does not trust in God and also does not obey God. He does not thank God for anything and he does not want to glorify God in anything (Romans 1:21). Everything the non-Christian does has no relationship to the God, who revealed himself in Jesus Christ. The non-Christian lives for himself, is selfish, self-centred, self-directed and lives completely independent from God. This "independence from God" and this "separation from God" are called "spiritual death". Such a person is like a beautiful flower in a vase that looks as if it is still alive, but in fact it is cut off from its root. Such a flower is already "dead"!

2:1-4,11-12

Question 2. Who was I before I became a Christian? What characterised me as a non-Christian?

Notes. Before I became a believer in Jesus Christ, I had the following characteristics (Ephesians 2:1-3,11-13):

(1) I was spiritually dead (Colossians 2:13).

My spirit had no awareness of the Living God. I thought that God did not exist. I thought that God was an invention of weak people. I did not need God. Or I believed in “a god” that was invented by some religious leader.

(2) I followed the ways of the world (1 John 2:15-17).

I copied the life-style and habits of the people around me. My behaviour was determined by what the majority of people thought, said and did. Possessions, power, fame and pleasure were the great values in my life. I lived for prosperity and success. Like everybody else, I lived for myself.

(3) I followed the ways of the devil (the ruler of the kingdom of the air, that is, the devil) without realising it (Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:13).

Like the devil, I told lies just (John 8:44). Sometimes I occupied myself with occult powers, like fortune-tellers, magicians, spiritists, etc. Sometimes I wore a necklace to protect me from evil spirits.

(4) I gratified the cravings of my sinful nature.

I was greedy for money. I enjoyed dirty jokes. I could not control my eyes. My anger ran out of control. My inward nature was corrupt. Some people are slaves of alcohol, drugs, pornography, sexual immorality (regardless of their sexual orientation/inclination), robbery, violence, gambling, lottery, TV, smart phones, gaming, internet, etc.

(5) As an unbeliever, a godless and unrighteous person, God was angry with me (John 3:36; Romans 1:18, cf. Psalm 5:5; 11:5)

God hated my independence, self-centredness, disobedience, worldliness and inner corruption.

(6) I was separate from Christ.

I did not know that the Living God was working through Jesus Christ. I listened to what other non-Christian religions said about Jesus Christ, without finding out what Jesus Christ himself said and did in the Bible. I had no idea how important Jesus Christ was. I spoke evil of the followers of Jesus Christ.

(7) I was excluded from the citizenship in Israel.

The word “Israel” is here not the same as the Jewish nation in the Middle East. The real “Israel” consists of people from all the nations who believe in the God who revealed himself in Jesus Christ (Romans 9:6). I was not a citizen of this people of God and had no share in the privileges of God’s people. These privileges are clearly taught in the Bible (its prophecies, promises and teachings), but I did not read the Bible. Therefore I also missed the protection god gives to his people.

(8) I was a foreigner to the covenants of God.

God made an agreement (covenant) with his people. Again and again God said to them: “I will be your God and you will be my people”. God wants to be my Saviour and Friend As a father carries his son all the way, so God wants to carry me all the way until I reach my destination (Deuteronomy 1:31). God reaffirmed this agreement again and again to his people. But before I heard the gospel, I never experienced that God said to me, “I am your Friend.”

(9) I was without hope.

I had no goal for my life. My life, my family and my work seemed absolutely meaningless. I did not know who I was, why I exist and where I was going. I continually felt insecure and threatened.

(10) I was without God in the world.

I lived a life in which the Living God had no place. To me the only reality was this physical and materialistic world. I called myself an atheist. I was self-centred, self-sufficient and independent. I determined my own life. In fact, I was my own god.

2:4-7

Question 3. What is the meaning of being made alive, raised and seated with Christ?

Notes. The Bible often says that the person who believes in Jesus Christ, dies with Christ, is resurrected with Christ and is exalted with Christ (to a seat/place) in heaven. This means that whatever happened to Jesus Christ two thousand years ago has an immediate effect on someone who begins to believe in Jesus Christ. The meaning of these words is that God the Father gives to believers in Jesus Christ “a new position (state)” and “a new condition (life-style)”. The new state is called “justification” and the new condition is called “sanctification”.

(1) The new state: “Justification”.

God gives to the Christian “the same legal state or position” Jesus Christ possesses before God. In the Bible this is called “justification” (the imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ to the believer).

God the Father looks at Christians as he looks at Christ. When God looks at the Christian, he no longer sees their sins, transgressions and iniquities, but only the righteousness of Christ. The righteousness of Jesus Christ consists of complete forgiveness, of all sins and the complete restoration of the broken relationship with God. Remember that “sin” means: “missing God’s goal”. Jesus Christ gained forgiveness and restoration by dying in the place of the believer and by raised from death so that also the believer is raised to the new life.

Because Jesus Christ died, the old sinful nature of the believers has also died. His old sinful nature has been nailed to the cross: was tried, condemned (doomed) and buried with Christ. Because Jesus Christ was raised from death (was made alive), the believer has also been made alive by receiving a new nature. This means, the Christian has been born-again (born from above) and possesses the new spiritual nature. Because Jesus Christ has been exalted into heaven, the Christian will in future also be exalted into heaven into the presence of God with a new body and spirit. Everything that happened to Jesus Christ will also happen to the person believing in Jesus Christ! The Christian dies, is raised to life and received a new state (position) in God’s eyes. This new state (position) guarantees that God will fulfil all his promises in the life of the Christian.

(2) The new condition: “Sanctification”.

God also gives to Christians “the same moral condition or way of life (lifestyle)” as Jesus Christ. In the Bible this is called “sanctification” (the application of the perfect holiness of Christ to the believer).

Through the work of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ) in the heart and life of the believer in Jesus Christ, the Christian is dead for sin and already now begins to live the new life on earth (1 Peter 2:24)! The condition of holiness leads to a life-style of sanctification and guarantees that the Christian will experience the new life more and more!

2:8-10

Question 4. If good works do not save me, why should I care about doing good works at all?

Notes.

(1) Christ already did the only good work that needs to be done for me to be saved!

He died, was resurrected and exalted in heaven in the place of everyone who believes in him! He completed doing everything necessary for me to be saved. By dying on the cross, Jesus Christ made atonement for all my sins, took away God’s anger against my sins, reconciled me to god and set me free (redeemed me) from the slavery of sin.

So, what is left for me to do? When I believe in Jesus Christ, I can only accept everything he gained for me as a great, complete free and undeserved gift! I do not deserve salvation. I cannot earn salvation. Salvation is given to me, because God loves me and is merciful to me!

(2) If I would boast about my good works, I would belittle the completed work of salvation of Jesus Christ.

If it were possible for religious works (like prayers, fasting, giving, clothing, eating. etc.) and good works to save (justify) a person, he would belittle the completed work of salvation of Jesus Christ and rob him of his glory. On the day of judgement he would be able to boast to God and say that he saved himself by his religious works or good works! He would boast before God and claim to be better than he really is.

However, religious works and good works are for God not good enough! If I want to be saved (justified) by my religious works or good works, then God demands that my religious works and good works should be absolutely (100%) perfect and complete! “Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it” (James 2:10)! “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the law” (Galatians 3:10)! But because there is not one person in the world, whose works are perfect or complete (Romans 3:10-12), no one will be justified in God’s eyes by his own works (Galatians 3:11)! Every single person, whether he is very religious or simply a humanist, falls short of God’s absolute perfect standard of righteousness and holiness! No one will ever be justified (saved) by his religious works or by his good works. No one will ever be able to boast in front of God!

(3) My good works should express gratitude.

A believer in Christ does good works because God calls him to it (Ephesians 2:9-10) and because he wants to express his gratitude for God’s free gift of salvation. Good works bring glory to God (Matthew 5:16) and also a reward (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Galatians 6:9-10)! God prepared many kinds of good works that Christians should do in the world and these are listed in the Bible (Deuteronomy 10:17-18; Mark 3:4; Romans 12:9-21). Therefore, a true Christian does two things: he praises and thanks God for the perfect good work of Jesus Christ that resulted in his salvation and he does good works as an expression of thankfulness for God’s free gift of salvation.

2:4-10,13-22

Question 5. Who are you now that you believe in Jesus Christ?
What characterises a Christian?

Notes. Now that I believe in Jesus Christ, I have a new identity! I have a complete new state (position) and a perfect new condition (Ephesians 2:4-7).

After becoming a believer, I have the following characteristics Ephesians 2:5-10,13-22:

(1) I am loved by God (Ephesians 2:4).

God loves me with an eternal love (Jeremiah 31:3).

(2) I have been raised and made alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:5-6).

“The old has gone, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17)!

(3) I have gained a definite place in the heavenly realms (heaven and new earth) (Ephesians 2:6-7).

In the coming ages he will show the incomparable riches of his grace for Christians (cf. Revelation 21:4).

(4) I have been saved for ever (Ephesians 2:8).

I have eternal life (life that does not end); I will never perish; and no-one can snatch me out of his hand (John 10:18-19).

(5) I have been made by God what I now am (Ephesians 2:10a).

I am precious in God’s eyes (Isaiah 43:4). God has made my body and spirit wonderful (Psalm 139:14).

(6) I have been created by God to do good works (Ephesians 2:14).

God created me for his glory (Isaiah 43:7). God has given me a hopeful future (Jeremiah 29:11). My whole existence is meaningful, because I am in the service of the living God.

(7) I have been reconciled to God and have come close to God (Ephesians 2:13).

God has made perfect peace with me and I have found perfect peace with him (Romans 5:1).

(8) I have been reconciled to other people (Ephesians 2:14).

I can relate well to people from other nations, languages and cultures (Ephesians 2:14-17).

(9) I have free access to God (Ephesians 2:18).

I may live in and experience his presence. I may enter his presence with confidence and communicate with him (Hebrews 4:15). I learn every day to walk with him (Genesis 5:22; Psalm 16:8).

(10) I have become a citizen of the kingdom of God (Ephesians 2:19a).

I am no longer a stranger or alien, but part of the kingdom of God and stand under his sovereign kingship. His kingdom is growing (expanding) every day and will one day rule over the universe (Daniel 2:44)!

(11) I have become a member of God’s household (family) (Ephesians 2:19b).

The family of God in this world is called “the Church”. I have the privilege to call God “our Father in heaven”. I have uncountable “brothers and sisters” over the whole world! The words “Father”, “brothers” and “sisters” have no physical connotation, but only spiritual meaning!

(12) I have become a part of God’s temple (Ephesians 2:22).

This is not a religious stone building, but “a spiritual house”. Every Christian is “a living stone” (1 Peter 2:4-5). This is a picture of the Church. God himself through his Holy Spirit (which is “the Spirit of Christ” or “Christ in me”)(Romans 8:9-10) lives in the Church. The Holy Spirit also lives in my body (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)!

STEP 4. APPLY.

APPLICATIONS

Consider. WHICH TRUTHS IN THIS PASSAGE ARE POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTIANS?

Make a list. Let us brainstorm with one another and make a list of possible applications from Ephesians 2:1-22.

Consider. WHICH POSSIBLE APPLICATION DOES GOD WANT YOU TO TURN INTO A PERSONAL APPLICATION?

Record. Write this personal application down in your notebook. Feel free to share your personal application.

(Remember that people in every group will apply different truths or even make different applications of the same truth. The following is a list of possible applications.)

1. Examples of possible applications from Ephesians 2:1-22.

2:1-4. Consider that you were spiritually dead because you had followed the wrong ways.

2:6. Practise the conviction: “I am in Christ. I am never alone anymore!”

2:5-8. Consider whether you have really been spiritually raised with Christ, that is, whether you have accepted Christ’s perfect and complete work of salvation for you, so that when God looks at you, he sees only the righteousness of Christ.

2:9. Consider whether you still try to win God’s favour by doing works of the law, good works or religious works.

2:10. Read the Bible and discover which good works God has prepared for you so that you may walk in them.

- 2:14-17. Consider whether you still look down on Christians who belong to a different race.
 2:18; 3:12. Practise to enter into God's presence, to listen to God's voice and to talk to God with freedom and confidence.
 2:19. Consider whether you see yourself as a citizen of God's kingdom and a member of God's family (household).
 2:22. Meditate on the fact that God dwells in the Church through his Holy Spirit.

2. Examples of personal applications from Ephesians 2:1-22.

With God's help I want to stop relying on my good works and religious works and instead rely on the fact that Jesus Christ has died for my sins and now lives in me through his Holy Spirit.

With God's help I want to change my attitude towards Christians who belong to another nation and language and in future regard them as a part of my heavenly family.

STEP 5. PRAY.	RESPONSE
LET US TAKE TURNS TO PRAY ABOUT ONE TRUTH THAT GOD HAS TAUGHT US in Ephesians 2:1-22. (Respond in your prayer to what you have learned during this Bible study. Practise to pray only in one or two sentences. Remember that people in every group will pray about different issues.)	

5	PRAYER (8 minutes)	<i>[INTERCESSION]</i> PRAY FOR OTHERS
----------	--------------------	--

Continue to pray in groups of two's or three's. Pray for one another and for the people in the world (Romans 15:30; Colossians 4:12).

6	PREPARATION (2 minutes)	<i>[ASSIGNMENT]</i> FOR NEXT LESSON
----------	-------------------------	--

(Group leader. Give the group members this preparation for at home in writing or let them copy it down).

1. **Commitment.** Make a commitment to one of the possible applications.
2. **Personal time with God.** Have a quiet time from half a chapter from Matthew 22:1 - 25:13 each day. Make use of the favourite truth method. Make notes.
3. **Memorisation.** Meditate and memorise the new Bible verse. (3) Assurance of victory: 1 Corinthians 10:13. Daily review the last 3 memorised Bible verses.
4. **Prayer.** Pray for someone or something specific this week and see what God is doing (Psalm 5:3).
5. **Update your notebook** on making disciples. Include the notes on your personal time with God, memorisation notes, Bible study notes and this preparation.