

INSIGHT

Discipleship has a positive and essential place in the lives of God's people. This holds true in both the Old and New Testaments. God's people had to learn how to be obedient to His will, to become more and more like their Lord. This was accomplished through "the discipline of the Lord" (*Deut. 11:2 NIV*). God deals with His people very much the same today, for "the Lord disciplines those he loves" (*Hebrews 12:6a*). Scripture teaches us that "God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness" (*Hebrews 12:10b NIV*). As we can see from this passage, the *discipline of the Lord* produces holiness. Verse eleven goes on to say "...it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Discipline refers to the process by which one learns a way of life. A disciple was like an apprentice who was learning a trade or craft from a master. Such learning required a relationship between the master who knew the way of life (discipline) and a learner (a disciple). Within this relationship, the teacher led the learner through a process (the discipline) until the learner could imitate or live like the master. Jesus taught this very concept in *Luke 6:40*, "A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher."

When Jesus called the twelve, it was to establish a master-learner relation with them. As they lived and worked with Him, Jesus disciplined them unto a way of life that was pleasing to God. Such discipline involved both praise and criticism, affirmation and rebuke. Today, Jesus does the same, through His church. He seeks people willing to learn; people who are pliable and moldable unto His likeness. What kind of pottery are you? What's your shape?

Becoming Like Christ

Discipleship: Being Pliable

Key Text:

Isaiah 64:8

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Theme:

Being molded after the likeness of the Lord should be every Christian's focus. To be like Jesus in every way is the attitude and desire of every true believer. Jesus calls us to be His disciples. But this requires a special kind of heart--a willing and moldable heart that is pliable like soft clay. Our mind-set and response to discipline will determine the kind of "vessel" we will become. What type of clay are you? Moldable or rigid and unyielding?

Application:

Here are some practical suggestions:

1. **Make it your goal** to be like Jesus in all you do: whether at work, at home, or in dealing with opposition.
2. **Have this question in mind:** "What would Jesus want me to do?" This question will prove to be very helpful when facing decisions or course of action!
3. **Be open to discipline.** Do not defend sin, but rather hate the sin, and love the reproof.
4. **Ask your discipler** to point out areas in your life that need work. Request reproof and correction! Don't give them a hard time when they expose your sin.
5. **Memorize Psalm 141:5!!!**

May the Lord richly bless you!

SERMON OUTLINE
<p>Pliability and Christianity</p> <p>I. A Lesson From The Potter</p> <p>A. Jeremiah 18:1-12</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jeremiah is sent to a potter's home. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. He is sent to receive a sermon already prepared by the Lord. b. Failure to shape the clay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- skillful potter; faulty clay -- clay formed into another type of pot <p>B. God's Lesson To Israel</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He has supreme dominion and authority over us. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Like the potter who shapes accordingly so does God shape us 2. Our composition determines our shape <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Punishment comes from our sin b. Solution: Be moldable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Return from sin --Reform your ways 3. Dangerous Attitude of Disbelief <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. "It's no use..." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --being obstinate in sin causes one not to be reformed b. Hopelessness was our former life (<i>Eph. 2:12</i>)--there is hope <p>II. Conclusion</p> <p>Make Him Lord of your life each day, and your strength he will renew! (<i>Isaiah 40:30-31</i>).</p>

SMALL GROUP STUDY
<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Have you ever tried to correct someone because you cared for them? How do they usually react? Why do so many people react poorly to correction?</p> <p>See To It Psalm 141:1-5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From these verses, what kind of man was David? 2. What was the main focus of his prayer? How did he pray? 3. David was known as a man after God's own heart (<i>1 Sam. 13:14</i>). From these verses, how is this manifested? 4. What did David desire of his friends? 5. The world thinks of reproof as an unkindness. Why did David see it differently? <p>Seeing It Closer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are we to receive reproof? 2. Read Ecclesiastes 7:6. What is the meaning of these verses? How is this done today? 3. Why is the laughter of fools like burning thorns under a pot? What will eventually happen to the burning thorns as compared to those who are not disciplined? 4. On a scale of 1 -5, how opened are you towards correction? (1-very open; 5-least open) <p>Getting To It:</p> <p>Pray a similar prayer like that of David in Psalm 141. Ask God to guard your mouth against evil and to have a willing, moldable heart that does not refuse the discipline of the Lord.</p>