**Discipleship: You were created to become like Christ**

**Connect**

**1. Share an insight from your reading that was meaningful to you this week.**

**2. Who is a model or mentor for you? What person (living or dead) would you like to imitate?**

**3. How is becoming like Jesus Christ different from the way most people understand discipleship?**

**4. What are some of the ways you’ve changed since you became a believer?**

**Memory Verse:** **In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.** **Romans 8:28** (NIV)

**Show video**

God doesn’t just want you to know about Jesus Christ, he wants you to become like Jesus Christ. This has been God’s plan for you since the beginning of time.

From the very beginning God decided that those who came to him – and all along he knew who would – should become like his Son. (TLB)

God wants us to grow up…like Christ in everything. Ephesians 4:15 (MSG)

**Three Tools God uses to Help us Grow**

**1. God uses \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to teach us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ him.**

Trials are situations designed by God to draw us closer to him. They stretch our faith and grow our character.

“Problems and trials…are good for us – they help us learn to be patient. And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady.” Romans 5:3-4 (TLB)

**Every \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

The purpose for problems is to make you like Jesus Christ and to build character in your life.

“Father” he cried out, “everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine!” Mark 14:36 (NLT)

Jesus surrendered to God’s plan. God wants you to surrender to his plan, too. He is teaching you to trust him in the Gethsemane of trouble.

“Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” 2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV)

**2. God uses \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to teach us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Him.**

Temptations are situations designed by the devil to draw us away from God. God doesn’t cause temptation. He never tempts us to do evil. But God can use even our temptations to make us more like Jesus if we cooperate with him. Why? Because every temptation involves a choice. We can choose to do evil, or we can choose to obey God. When we choose to obey God, we take another step in our spiritual growth. Our character is shaped by our choices.

“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.” Matthew 4:1

“(Jesus) was tempted in every way that we are. But he did not sin! Hebrews 4:15b (CEV)

“And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.” 1 Cor. 10:13 (NLT)

Ultimately, it all comes down to your choices. Will you choose to obey the temptation or will you choose to obey God? Every time you choose to obey God, you become more like Christ in your character.

**3. God uses \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to teach us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

Trespasses are situations designed by other people to hurt us.

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.” Matt.6:12

Jesus said, “Father, forgive these people! They don’t know what they’re doing.” Luke 23:34 (CEV)

“They called him every name in the book and he said nothing back. He suffered in silence, content to let God set things right.” 1 Peter 2:23 (MSG)

If you’re going to become like Christ, you have to learn to forgive.

**Remember that God \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

“…forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.” Ephesians 4:32 (CEV)

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“You meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good to save the lives of many people, which is being done. Genesis 50:20 (NCV)

God uses trouble to teach us to trust. God uses temptation to teach us to obey. And God uses trespasses to teach us to forgive. He does all these things to make us like Christ.

“We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with him, then we’re certainly going to go through the good times with him!” Romans 8:17

**Discovery Questions** (Don’t feel pressured to discuss every question. The point isn’t to race through the session; the point is to take time to let God work in your lives).

1. God uses trouble to teach us to trust. What problem in your life has brought about the greatest growth in your character? How has God used pain or trouble to help you grow?

2. God uses temptation to teach us to obey. What is the most difficult temptation you are facing these days? When are you most vulnerable to temptation?

3. God uses trespasses to teach us to forgive. Who do you need to forgive? What is God teaching you about forgiveness lately?

**Prayer Direction- Example of praying Scripture:**

Ephesians 4:15 – “God wants us to grow up…like Christ in everything.”

**Prayer:** “God, please help me to grow up like Christ in every part of my life.”

**Now you try it…**

In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

“Problems and trials…are good for us – they help us learn to be patient. And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady.” Romans 5:3-4

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