

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 1 – How to Become a Mature Christian

Lesson 2 - How to Become a Mature Christian

Paul said in Hebrews (paraphrasing), “I can’t give you the strong meat, because you are babes.”

KJV – Hebrews 5:12-14

¹²For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. ¹³**For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.** ¹⁴**But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age**, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

What is the difference between one who is mature (of full age) and a babe?

Maturity is exemplified by how a person has learned to take the Word of God and apply it to their lives so that they take unto themselves the character of God.

The word ‘**righteousness**’ in Hebrews, and elsewhere, means ‘*the value or equity; equality of the character of God*’.

The character of God (the equality of character with the Father) that Jesus has is **imputed unto us**.

KJV – Philippians 3:9

¹⁴And be found in him, not having mine own **righteousness**, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the **righteousness** which is of God by faith:

NKJV – 2 Corinthians 5:21

²¹For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that **we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

The sign of a mature saint is that they have taken on the character and nature of Christ Himself. The mature Christian has learned to let the Word penetrate every part of their life and transform their life into Christ likeness.

At what point do we stop growing and maturing?

The point at which you stop letting the Word transform you is the point at which you stop letting the Word dictate to you; how you think, how you speak, how you act and how you walk. That point is the point you stop maturing and where you stop growing.

Many Christians want the benefits of Heaven, but they don’t want the dictates of the Word.

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**

SECTION 1 – Lesson 2

The purpose of discipleship is to take the Word of God and apply it to the hidden secret (deceptive) areas of our heart.

In Genesis we find a reference as to how we normally respond to the exposing of the secret areas of our heart.

Adam said to God:

NKJV – Genesis 3:10

¹⁰So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

It is in our sin nature that **when we start getting exposed, we want to hide.**

But God says [in principle], “No, no, no. I want you to run to me. When you run into the light, I’m going to expose the dark secrets of your heart.”

If you are going to be a disciple, you are going to have to take on three main attitudes in approaching discipleship:

1. Apply yourself to understanding.
2. Allow yourself to be corrected.
3. Determine to endure the pain of discipleship.

1 – Apply Yourself to Understanding

KJV – Proverbs 2:1-5

¹My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ²So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding; ³Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding; ⁴**If thou seekest her** as silver, and **searchest for her** as *for* hid treasures; ⁵**Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.**

You should want the knowledge of God, the wisdom of God, the understanding of God more than you want anything else.

(verse 5) (paraphrasing), “When you press in that hard, then you’ll understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.”

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**
SECTION 1 – Lesson 2

The Bible says (paraphrasing), “The fear of the Lord is to depart from the evil way. The fear of God is clean.”

NKJV – Proverbs 3:7

⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes;
Fear the Lord and depart from evil.

NKJV – Psalm 19:9

⁹The fear of the Lord *is* clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the Lord *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

The fear of God actually draws you closer to God.

You are not going to get the fear of God without the revelation knowledge of God. You have to get to the place where you have ‘spiritual understanding’.

KJV – Mark 4:23-25

²³If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. ²⁴And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. ²⁵For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

NOTE: This is also confirmed in Matthew 11:15; Mark 4:9, Luke 8:7-9, and Luke 8:18.

Firstly, (verse 24), the word ‘hear’ literally means **to hear and understand**. Jesus says (paraphrasing), “He who has an ear to hear and understand, let him hear and understand. Be careful what you listen to. Be careful what you’re hearing. For with whatever measure you apply [Apply to what? Apply to hearing and understanding the Word.], with whatever measure you meet, you’ll apply hearing and understanding, and then it will be measured back unto you.”

Secondly, (verse 25), (paraphrasing), “...he that hath understanding, to him shall be given more. He that does not have understanding...even that which he may have shall be taken away.”

What shall be given to the person who has understanding?

Revelation: Only when you have understanding (not just natural understanding) will you be given more revelation.

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course
SECTION 1 – Lesson 2

In Mark 4:24-25 above, Jesus is referring to **spiritual revelation understanding**.

NKJV – 1 Corinthians 2:14

¹⁴But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

You have got to apply your heart to get revelation understanding.

AMP – Ephesians 1:17

¹⁷[For I always pray to] the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, that He may grant you a spirit of wisdom and revelation [of insight into mysteries and secrets] in the [deep and intimate] knowledge of Him,

Apostle Paul, one of the most spiritual people of his day, is praying that God would give to them a supernatural anointing to see into the spirit realm, to understand the mysteries of God, to understand the revelation. Why? Because when they get that revelation, they're going to have the fear of God. When they get the fear of God, then they will depart from the evil way. They are going to take on the character and nature of God.

The problem in our world today

is not that there's too much sin in the world,

but that there is too little of Jesus revealed.

God wants to reveal His mysteries and secrets by having the eyes of our heart flooded with light.

KJV – Deuteronomy 29:29

²⁹The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

God has secrets and these secrets belong to God.

God wants to release

a spirit of wisdom and revelation upon you.

If you want to be a disciple, you're going to have to apply yourself to understanding...apply yourself to seek after God. God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**

SECTION 1 – Lesson 2

NKJV – Hebrews 11:6 (reference)

⁶But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

2 – Allow Yourself to be Corrected

Everybody thinks they are right and says, “I’m right, they’re wrong.”

NKJV – Proverbs 21:2

²Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes,
But the Lord weighs the hearts.

We don’t like to be corrected. Comfort is the curse of a compromised Gospel. True change only comes by confrontation.

KJV – 1 Corinthians 3:1

¹And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

We’re born babies into the Kingdom of God, and we need correction, we need direction, and we need it from the pulpit.

What is needed is some correction and adjustment in our thinking and our attitude.

When we are willing to receive the correction and change, even though it hurt sometimes, then we see God move in a powerful way.

Are you willing to receive correction?

3 – Determine to Endure the Pain of Discipleship

Sometimes true discipleship hurts.

KJV – Proverbs 23:13&14

¹³Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. ¹⁴Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

KJV – Hebrews 12:5&6

⁵And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

⁶For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**
SECTION 1 – Lesson 2

What does “chasten” and “scourge” mean?

The word ‘chasten’ means to punish, and ‘scourge’ literally means to whip or flog.

If you are going to go through true discipleship, you have to allow the Word to really pierce and penetrate you. You have to allow the instruction of God to deal with you deeply on the inside.

You understand that the Word must penetrate to the dividing of soul and spirit. The Word must expose and it must rip out the junk to bring in the new. There has to come a confrontation, and comfort is the curse of a compromised Gospel, because true change only comes by confrontation.

For further study:

Key Topic: Progressive Transformation

Question: What is the difference between one who is mature (of full age) and a babe?

NKJV – 2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

NKJV – Galatians 2:20

²⁰I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

NKJV – Romans 8:29

²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Key Topic: Transformation and Growth

Question: At what point do we stop growing and maturing?

NKJV – 2 Corinthians 6:14

¹⁴Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course
SECTION 1 – Lesson 2

NKJV – 2 Corinthians 6:17

¹⁷Therefore “*Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you.*”

NKJV – Matthew 28:19-20

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.”

NKJV – Hebrews 4:12

¹²For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

AMP – Hebrews 4:12

²For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart.

NKJV – 2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁶All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

NKJV – Psalm 91:1

¹He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

NKJV – Isaiah 53:5

⁵But He *was* wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.

NKJV – Romans 8:14

¹⁴For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.