

# THE MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

A Bible Study on the Transformations in the Life of a Disciple of Christ



## Lesson 1: Transformation of the Heart

Disciples are spiritually regenerate; God has forgiven their sin and God's Spirit now indwells them.

What does it mean to be a disciple? \_\_\_\_\_

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What are some of the characteristics of a disciple of Christ?

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### A Disciple of Christ:

- Follower of Christ: turned from their sin and trusted Jesus.
- Surrendered. Not just wanting to go to heaven but understand God's authority in their life and is surrendered to that.
- Transformed by Christ.

What do you think it means to be transformed? \_\_\_\_\_

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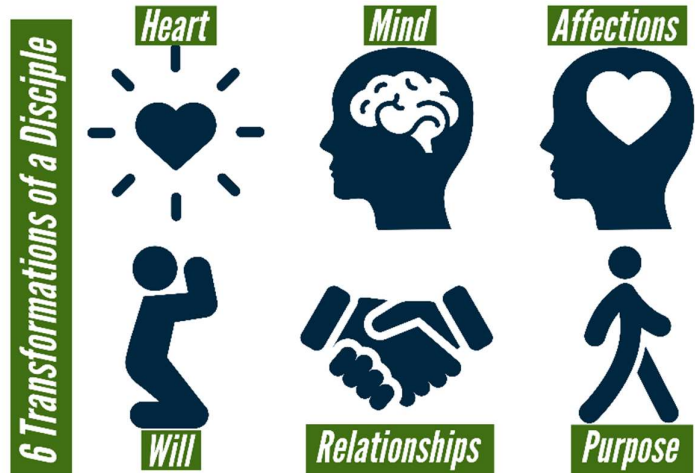
Transformation means more than just change. You can change your clothes, change your hair style. You will still be the same person. Only your appearance has changed. Instead, think of when a child grows into an adult. A girl becomes a woman and a boy becomes a man, completely changing into something new. Think of the insect that transforms into a butterfly.

Being transformed by Christ changes us into a new person. Some transformations occur automatically. We are made a new creation in Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:16-17**). Other transformations come as we are changed into the image of Christ.

Note the 6 transformations we will study listed below.

Today we will focus on the disciple's transformation of the heart.

*Disciples are spiritually regenerate; God has forgiven their sin and God's Spirit now indwells them.*



This transformation is first because it begins at salvation.

We can't have true transformations in our mind, affections, will, relationships, and purpose without the heart change that comes through trusting in Jesus as our Savior.

Let's look at salvation.

At salvation we are:

- Forgiven

What does **1 John 1:9** tell us? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Made New

**Titus 3:4-6** <sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

- Have the Holy Spirit to enable us to live a godly life.

**Ephesians 1:13** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were \_\_\_\_\_ with the promised Holy Spirit.

If you have not received salvation, that is first for you today.

The Gospel is this:

- We all are born dead in our sins (**Ephesians 2:1**).
- We are born with that sin and the wages of sin is death (**Romans 6:23**).
- We can't do ANYTHING to get to God outside of accepting Jesus.

What does God's Word tell us about our attempt to be righteous without Jesus?

- All our righteous deeds are like \_\_\_\_\_ (**Isaiah 64:6**).
- \_\_\_\_\_ does good, not \_\_\_\_\_ (**Romans 3:12**).

Write **John 14:6** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- If we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (**Romans 10:9**).

Read **John 3:1-8** when Jesus teaches Nicodemus that it is necessary to be "born again".

What does Jesus mean by "born again" (see verses 5 and 6)?

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Read **John 3:16**. Have you been born again?

If so, share with someone your story of when you began to follow Jesus.

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If you are not born again, what concerns/challenges are keeping you from accepting to follow Jesus?

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**Bottom line:** *To be a disciple you must first be born again. Evangelism resulting in biblical conversion is the essential first step in biblical discipleship.*



## Lesson 2: Transformation of the Mind

*Disciples are biblically grounded; they believe what Jesus says.*

This transformation is about being in God's Word. It is necessary to know and study God's Word in order to have a transformed mind.

God's Word is our food. In the same way that a person who only ate one time a week would feel weak and sick and unable to continue living in such a manner, believers can not rely on hearing a sermon once a week and neglecting God's Word throughout the week. It is necessary to read and meditate on God's Word daily.

We need to:

- **Know it.** Capturing every thought
- **Believe it.** and making it obedient
- **Understand it.** to Christ
- **Obey it.**

### Know it.

Read **Romans 12:2**

Do not be \_\_\_\_\_ to this world, but be \_\_\_\_\_ by the renewal of your \_\_\_\_\_, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Knowing God's Word transforms our mind so we will know His will and know what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Read **Colossians 3:16**

Let the word of Christ \_\_\_\_\_, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

**Believe it.**

The Bible is inerrant (meaning it is without error).

Read **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Proverbs 30:5**

Every word of God proves \_\_\_\_\_; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

**Understand it.**

“It is important that we understand the whole story of scripture. It is not a random collection of stories and teachings, but a connected historical narrative, with an author, a beginning, a cast of historical characters, an overarching plotline, and a destination.” Foundations Addendum 2

Have you considered how you have traditionally viewed scripture? Does the quote above give you additional insight into scripture or a new understanding? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read **1 Corinthians 2:10-12**. Who helps us understand the things of God? \_\_\_\_\_

Pray that God will enlighten you to the truths of scripture that you may understand His word more. Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you as you read God’s Word.

**Obey it.**

**John 15:10-11**

If you \_\_\_\_\_, you will \_\_\_\_\_, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

What will make our joy to be full according to **John 15:10**?

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Read Jesus' words in **Matthew 7:24-27**.

How does Jesus describe the one who hears His words and does them?

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How does Jesus describe the one who hears His words but does not do them?

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How do you need to respond to this story today?

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**Bottom Line:** *Disciples of Jesus are passionate about the Bible. It completely reshapes the way they think, as the worldview of the Bible becomes their worldview. They approach the Bible with a pre-commitment to believe, understand, and obey everything it teaches. They learn the big picture of the Bible, and they interpret individual parts in the context of the whole.*





## Lesson 3: Transformation of Affections

*Disciples are deeply satisfied; they desire what Jesus desires.*

What does it mean to have the same desires as Jesus? What are some of the things that Jesus wants and loves?

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Read the scripture below and record what you find that Jesus wants and loves.

**2 Timothy 2:22**

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**Matthew 22:35-40**

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**Philippians 4:8-9**

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**John 17:20-24**

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There are many more scriptures we could explore from Jesus' teachings. Is there another scripture that comes to mind that teaches more of what Jesus loves and desires?

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How are you doing at loving what God loves and doing what He desires for you to do? What adjustments do you need to make in wanting and loving what Jesus wants and loves?

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Not only do we love what Jesus loves but we also hate what he hates. What are some of the things that Jesus hates?

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Jesus hates sin and worldly pursuits.

What is listed in **Proverbs 6:16-19** that the Lord hates?

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What does **1 John 2:15-17** tell us about loving the world?

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Scripture addresses the love of money many times. We must be careful not to love money and allow it to be our desire.

Look at the scriptures below that give specific warnings of loving money.

- **Hebrews 13:5**
- **1 Timothy 6:9-10**
- **Luke 16:13**

Note that it is the love of money and allowing it to be your master that is a sin. Our love belongs to the Lord and He should be our only master. Pray for the Lord to help you in these areas.

Look at **Colossians 3:5-17**

Read through the list of things that believers should “put to death” and the things that believers should “put on”. List the ones that stand out to you. Pray about things in your life that you need to “put to death” and those things that you need to “put on”. Pray for the Lord to help you in these areas.

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Another aspect of having transformed affections is that loving and serving God is a delight and not a duty, even when it requires sacrifice.

The Word of God is clear that being a disciple of Jesus and living a life that reflects Christ requires sacrifice.

**John 12:25**

Whoever \_\_\_\_\_ his life \_\_\_\_\_ it, and whoever \_\_\_\_\_ his life in this world will keep it for \_\_\_\_\_.

What does it look like to “hate your life in this world”?

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What does **Matthew 10:34-39** tell us about following Christ?  
What does that look like in the life of a believer today?

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Do you find that serving the Lord is a delight or a duty? Meditate and thank God for all that He has done for you and for all the blessings that you have in your life which are from Him.

**Bottom Line:** *Disciples of Jesus grow to love what he loves, value what he values, and hate what he hates. Their affections are set on the things of God, and those affections grow to supersede the attractions of sin and the things of this world. They grow to obey God out of desire, not simply out of duty.*



## Lesson 4: Transformation of Will

*Disciples are humbly obedient; they do what Jesus commands.*

Disciples know the Word of God and are obedient to the Word of God. As believers understand the Word of God and follow it faithfully, their will is conformed to God's will.

Following God's Word:

- About actively doing what God's Word commands.

Read **James 1:22-25**

If you only hear the Word and neglect to obey the Word, what are you doing to yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**James 1:22** But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, \_\_\_\_\_ yourselves.

How does **James 1:23-24** describe the man who hears the Word of God yet does not obey it? What is he like?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**James 1:25** tells us that that the man who hears and Word and is a doer of the Word is \_\_\_\_\_.

How are you doing at being sure to obey all that the Word says?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- **About joyfully submitting to the things God commands.**

How does the psalmist in **Psalm 1:1-2** view the law?

...but His \_\_\_\_\_ is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he \_\_\_\_\_ day and night.

We are called to serve joyfully. When the people of Israel did not serve with “joyfulness and gladness of heart”, God threatened judgement upon them (**Deuteronomy 28:47-48**).

Are you serving the Lord joyfully? Is there an area of your life where you need to ask God to remind you of your joy in salvation, that you may obey well?

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- **About obeying out of love, NOT to make ourselves “right” or to add to the work of Christ.**

Jesus said, “If you \_\_\_\_\_ me, you will keep my commandments” (**John 14:15**).

For this is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not \_\_\_\_\_ (**1 John 5:3**).

Do you find it easy to obey out of love or do you obey out of fear or a desire to earn favor by good works? Prayerfully, consider your motivation and ask God to help you to be motivated by your love for Him and His great love for you.

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***“The more [believers] walk according to God’s Word, the more Jesus conforms their ways to His will” (Foundations p. 55).***

What does it look like for your ways to be conformed to God’s will? What changes or growth would you like to see in your life for your ways/will to be transformed into His? Pray for God to work in your life in this area.

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***Bottom line: Disciples of Jesus obey God by obeying everything His Word teaches. They do not obey in order to make themselves right with God, or to add anything at all to the work of Christ, but out of the faith, hope, and love that flow from the gospel.***



## Lesson 5: Transformation of our Relationships

*Disciples love sacrificially; they serve as Jesus serves.*

If you have a transformed heart, mind, affections, and will, your relationships will be changed, but we also have specific teaching about how our relationships should be.

Who are some of the people that you are in relationship with (who is in your community)?

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Some of the examples you may have written are: family, neighbors, community (like fundis, teachers, shop workers, etc.), the church, the lost, the church of the world.

What should those relationships look like? What are some characteristics of healthy relationships?

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Listed below are some characteristics of healthy relationships.

- Loving
- Serving one another
- Sacrificing for one another
- Forgiving/Reconciled

Are these easy to nurture in a relationship?

Most of us would agree that it can be quite challenging. Scripture, however, commands us to live in relationships in this



way and we have to have His Word encouraging us towards obedience and His Holy Spirit enabling us in obedience.

○ **Loving others**

- Jesus teaches that we are to love our \_\_\_\_\_. God sends rain and sunshine on both (**Matt 5:43-48**, **Luke 6:27-36**).
- Jesus teaches to love \_\_\_\_\_ and your \_\_\_\_\_ as yourself. This sums up the whole law (**Matt 22:37-40**).
- Jesus teaches that people will know \_\_\_\_\_ if we love (**John 13:34-35**).
- Jesus commands us to love, laying down our \_\_\_\_\_ for another (**John 15:12-17**).

Who is speaking in all of these passages? Does this help you understand how important it is to love one others?

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The Word warns us about **hating** instead of **loving**. Please read **1 John 3:11-15**.

Look closely at verse 14 and 15.

Whoever does not love abides in \_\_\_\_\_.

Everyone who hates his brother is a \_\_\_\_\_, and you know that no \_\_\_\_\_ has eternal life abiding in him.

Read **1 John 4:7-21**.

Verse 7: We are to \_\_\_\_\_ one another.

Verse 8: Anyone who does not love, \_\_\_\_\_.

Verse 12: If we love one another, God \_\_\_\_\_ with us and love is \_\_\_\_\_ in us.

Verses 13–21 help us to understand how love is made perfect. It is complete through salvation. We have total assurance because He abides with us. We have a relationship with Him and our future is secure.

- **Serving others.**

Read **Galatians 5:13–15**.

For what purpose are we to use our freedom?

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What is the warning, if instead, we “bite and devour one another”?

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What do you think it means to “bite and devour one another”? Can you think of a time when you were “bit” or “devoured” by someone? What happened in that situation? Have you been guilty of doing that to another person?

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Galatians is teaching on how Christ has set us free. That freedom isn’t so we live in any worldly manner, but so we serve one another.

- **Sacrificing for others.**

- If we love well, we’ll sacrifice. We must. Real love requires sacrifice. Christ gave up his own life and we will be required to sacrifice as well.

Read the Scripture below.

- Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God (**Ephesians 5:1-2**).
- By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers (**1 John 3:16**).
- Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth (**1 John 3:18**).

Where/how is God calling you today to sacrifice for others? Consider your family and neighbors, your fellow believers, the lost, etc. How can you lay down your life for others?

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- **Forgiving others/Living Reconciled to others.**
  - Christ forgave us, so we are to forgive.
    - Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you (**Ephesians 4:32**).
    - Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive (**Colossians 3:13**).
    - For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you (**Matthew 6:14**).

Is there someone who you need to forgive? Pray and ask God if you have been withholding forgiveness from someone who has wronged or hurt you.

How are we to experience transformed relationships, knowing that they require deep love, service, sacrifice, and forgiveness?

Thankfully in Galatians, after teaching about freedom in Christ, we are called to walk by the Spirit. The Holy Spirit enables believers to be in transformed relationships. The fruit of the Holy Spirit enables us and supplies us what we need.

List the Fruit of the Holy Spirit below.

**Galatians 5:22-23**

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Is there a characteristic from this list that you need to ask God to develop in your life?

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In conclusion, how are you doing in your relationships with others? Have they been transformed through Christ?

Is there anyone who you know you have a broken relationship with that needs healing?

Are you walking with the Spirit or do you allow your flesh to conquer you?

Pray. Pray about relationships and to be spirit led. Is there an area where you struggle? What is God asking you to do? Do you need to go to a certain person? Are you walking by the flesh and need to repent, asking the Holy Spirit to lead you?

**Bottom line:** *Disciples of Jesus love one another as Christ has loved them and love their neighbors as themselves. This love expresses itself practically in forgiveness and service, even to our enemies. Our love includes our church, our families, the global body of Christ, the lost, and the poor.*



## Lesson 6: Transformation of Purpose

*Disciples are missionally engaged; they make disciples who make disciples of all nations.*

What is the purpose of a pen?

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A pen is made to write. Consider the mother. Her purpose is to raise and care for her children. As a farmer's purpose is to grow crops, so the purpose of a business owner is to promote their items and sell them to make money.

Let us consider the purpose of a Christian.

What is our purpose as Christians?

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There are many things we could list in how we live and serve as believers in Christ, but our ultimate purpose is to glorify God.

### 1 Corinthians 10:31

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all

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### How do we glorify God?

- **Surrendering** to His invitation for salvation.
- **Studying** and **Obeying** the Bible.
- **Seeking** to have the mind of Christ and **sharing** in what He loves.
- **Rejecting** worldly pursuits and living by the flesh.
- **Seeking** healthy, God honoring, relationships.

We have already discussed these things as we looked at the transformations in the life of a disciple. Along with these things, believers we go and share. Disciples of Christ have a transformed purpose to share the good news of Christ with others so that God is glorified among the nations.

As believers we share the gospel message with others and God is glorified. Others hear of God's grace and mercy and learn of God's plan to reconcile sinners to Himself.

We are called to:

- **Proclaim the gospel.**

Read **Luke 24:44-49**.

In verse 47, Jesus is sending out his disciples and tells them that "repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be \_\_\_\_\_ in his name to all nations..."

This message is for everyone who calls themselves a follower of Christ, as we are also His disciples. We know that it is God's will for believers to share the reason for their hope and to proclaim the gospel message.

- **Go, make disciples, baptize, teaching them to obey.**

Read and write down **Matthew 28:19-20**.

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Are you confident in sharing the gospel with others?

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What tools or help do you need in order to be confident in sharing the gospel?

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Are you obedient to the call to teach new believers to observe all that Jesus has commanded? Why or why not?

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Pray and ask God if there is someone you know in your community who needs to hear the gospel from you.

Pray and ask God if there is someone in your community who is a believer who needs to be encouraged in knowing and following the Bible.

Pray for those all over the world who don't know Jesus. Pray for God to send believers to them to hear and understand the gospel message.

**Bottom line:** *Disciples of Jesus share the gospel, disciple other believers, and engage in the global spread of the gospel to all peoples.*

PRAYING THROUGH THE  
**6 MARKS OF A  
TRANSFORMED  
DISCIPLE**



*Transformed*  
**HEART**

JOHN 3:3

Pray that you would always seek  
God's kingdom.



*Transformed*  
**MIND**

ROMANS 12:2

Pray that you would know the good,  
acceptable, and perfect will of God.



*Transformed*  
**AFFECTIONS**

JOHN 12:25

Pray that you would be obedient to  
Christ's commands out of desire, not  
just out of duty.



*Transformed*  
**WILL**

JOHN 14:15

Pray that you would live out of the  
faith, hope, and love that flow from  
the gospel.



*Transformed*  
**RELATIONSHIPS**

GALATIANS 5:14

Pray that you would reflect Christ's  
character as you interact with others—  
believers and unbelievers alike.



*Transformed*  
**PURPOSE**

JOHN 20:21

Pray that you would be faithful in  
evangelism, in discipleship, in joys,  
and in suffering.



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