

Communion with God

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Series Council of God

2025

Translated from original:

©2013 by Church in Salvador

6th Edition, August 2013

Cover

Acesso Tecnologia

Graphic Design

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Desktop Publishing

Acesso Tecnología

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This translation was made in August 2025, complying to the most recent Portuguese text (Disciples in New Jersey, USA).

The Bible version that we are using in this work is the New King James Version (NKJV), when otherwise the version it will be referenced locally in the text.

Av. Estados Unidos 397 – Ed. Cidade do Salvador, sala 310
Salvador, Bahia. CEP 40.018-900

Summary

Introduction	7
How Teaching in the Church Should Be	9
How to work with this material	11
Part 1 Communion with God: The good part	
Lesson 1 An invitation to the good part	15
Lesson 2 The basis of our communion	19
Part 2 Prayer	
Lesson 3 Praying without ceasing	25
Lesson 4 Dedicating a special time to prayer	29
Lesson 5 Giving thanks for everything	33
Lesson 6 Praising from the heart	37
Lesson 7 Presenting prayers and supplications	43
Lesson 8 The efficacy of prayer	47
Part 3 Fasting	
Lesson 9 Fasting to God	53
Part 4 The Word	
Lesson 10 Feeding on the Word	59
Lesson 11 Being shaped by the Word	63

Introduction

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.
(Joh 15:15)

This is a very special subject. There is an invitation from the heart of God to his children. He calls us to walk in his presence and to enjoy His blessed company. His heart longs for our presence. He invites us to a personal and intimate relationship.

What a mystery! God Almighty desires to be in fellowship with us. We are invited to dive into the adventure of getting to know Him. If we marvel at the inspired Scriptures, what a superior experience is to know the One who inspired them. If the privilege of being his servants is great, what an incomparable honor and pleasure there is in being His friends.

In this booklet, we will deal with some practical aspects of our relationship with God. It is part of the set of basic themes for the formation of a disciple. The other booklets are: Elementary Principles; The Eternal Purpose of God; Life in Christ; Family; The Gospel of the Kingdom; The mission of the disciple; Character; Work; Finances; The relationship between siblings; The church and the return of Christ.

We want to express our gratitude for the life of the beloved Ivan Baker, who was for everyone an inspiring and challenging model, always manifesting intense communion and dependence on the Lord, until he left to meet his precious Jesus a few months ago.

The desire of our Lord and also our expectation is that you become a friend of God, and that your life will be an ongoing experience of knowing Him and walking in His presence.

Let us know and pursue the knowledge of the Lord. Hos 6:3a

Salvador, March 2006

Presbytery in Salvador

How Teaching in the Church Should Be

The disciples who are learning and teaching must be prepared to manage simple studies. The Lord commands us to feed "lambs" and not "giraffes". Those who have greater capacity, should humbly bow down to eat of the plate of the little ones: Jesus exclaimed, "*I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes....*" (Mat 11:25,26). The Church does not need an academic and intellectual teaching (1Co 1:18-31; 2:1-16) to please the Lord.

It is good to remember the example of the first Church in Jerusalem. She is the model for all time. The brothers of that time were simple and many of them could not read or write. There was no printing press or paper. Nor did they have Bibles. Nevertheless, the church was holy and glorious, a model for us.

Looking at the manner in which they lived, we note that the apostles used the method of constant repetition (catechism). Those who learned could assimilate and keep the Word in their minds and hearts. They did not walk seeking novelties or inventing things. But the important things they taught were repeated for a long time until everyone had learned well (Php 3:1; 2Pe 1:12-15).

The apostles were well aware of the necessity to transmit the Total Counsel of God and not biblical or theological concepts. Each disciple had to be formed in the image of Jesus Christ (Act 20:26,27; Phi: 4:9; 2Ti 2:2). The teaching of the apostles basically pointed to three things:

- The revelation of the Christ; His person, His power, His promises;
- Teaching all of the commandments that Jesus gave us in order to live;
- Establish all of the principles for the functioning of the church.

We have to return to simplicity so that the whole counsel of God can be received and absorbed by all the brothers, especially the less educated. God will never examine us about our knowledge with respect to the contents of the Bible. He will ask us how we lived. A doctrine should only indicate how the disciples should live (Tit 2:1-15).

How to work with this material

This book is divided into lessons to be studied by the disciples on their own as well as in conjunction with their disciplers.

Because we do not want to digest all the teaching for the disciple, there are two sections in each lesson: Seeking Revelation and Understanding More.

Seeking Revelation

In this section we want the disciple to have contact with God and His Word, and to receive revelation and the knowledge of Him and His Word through prayer.

The disciple should read each of the verses indicated in the **Bible Reading** section, praying to the Lord for revelation.

He should also seek to answer the questions from **Help for Meditation** in his notebook, making note of everything that he has learned as well as any questions he has.

In each lesson, there are some phrases and Bible verses for **Catechism** (teaching by repetition). They should be repeated as they are in the booklet, so all disciples will work with the same texts. They were chosen from the best translation of that text.

Understanding More

This section is for the disciple to deepen and enrich his understanding of that which he has already meditated on.

However, he should only go on to this section after having carefully done the previous section (Seeking Revelation) and after having shown his meditations and notes to his discipler. Together the disciple and discipler should read the content that is in this section (Understanding More).

Part 1 | **Communion with God: the good part**

But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her. (Luk 10:42)

Lesson 1 | An invitation to the good part

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

Joh 15:15; 17:3; 1Pe 1:8; Luk 10:38-42.

Help for meditation

What is the difference between a servant and a friend and why does Jesus make this statement?

What does John 17:3 mean?

In Luke 10:38-42, what does Jesus call the good part? What does the Lord say to you today?

Catechism

For what kind of relationship does the Lord call us?

The Lord calls us into a personal and intimate relationship with him.

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. (Joh 15:15)

Understanding More

An invitation to the good part

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.
(Joh 15:15)

A disciple of Christ is not a simple follower of His commandments and laws. He's a friend of His. What a great honor!

We are called to a personal relationship with Christ. We cannot live only by knowing His commandments. We would be missing the best of the Christian life. If someone does not have a relationship to God, even if he fulfills some of His commandments, he is a "religious" person. Someone can know the words of God and not know God.

Furthermore, we cannot live only from communion with the brothers, although it is something very important. We need a personal and intense relationship with the Lord. Let us not replace our relationship with God for anything else in this life. Not even with the relationship among the brothers.

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (Joh 17:3)

The most important thing in the present and future life is knowing God. We will spend eternity enjoying our relationship to Him and knowing Him better. In heaven, this will be everything: to relate to the Lord, to know Him and to love Him more and more. What bliss! And, already in this life, there is nothing better than developing this knowledge. What a tremendous and desirable adventure: to know and relate to the beloved and almighty God of the Universe. If we want to cooperate with God, we must know His desires and His heart. Everything we do will only have eternal value as we cooperate with God's purpose..



In life, nothing compares to our relationship with God.

As we develop this relationship, the moments with the Lord will become more pleasing until a day will come when there will be nothing else that we would rather do than enjoy that communion.

Furthermore, an intense relationship with the Lord will produce in us such love for Him that any service or commandment from Him will be smooth. We will never think of abandoning him. With great joy, we will endure to the end. Even without seeing Jesus with our human eyes, our love for Him will grow and will not diminish as time goes by.

(...) Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory. (1Pe 1:8)

The good part

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.". (Luk 10:38-42)



*Let us not exchange our friendship with Jesus with
our service to Him*

Martha served the Lord, but she had exchanged her relationship with the Lord for service to Him. Her intentions were good, but she was missing the best part: enjoying that time with the Lord at home. Mary saw this and chose the Lord. And this action of Mary's also pleased Jesus. He wanted to be with them, to talk with them, to enjoy that relationship with them. And it's a scene that repeats itself with us today. Let us learn this precious lesson: let us not exchange Jesus for service to Him.

Serving the Lord is very good, it is a great privilege. But relating to Him is incomparably better.

Let us accept His invitation of love. Let us do as Mary did, choosing the good part.



*Serving the Lord is good, but having a
relationship with Him is the best part*

Lesson 2 | The basis of our communion

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

Heb 10:19-22; Joh 4:23.

Help for meditation

How can we approach God?

What is the only way to access Him?

What kind of worshipers does the Lord seek? What does this mean?

Catechism

How can we approach God?

*Jesus is the new and living
way of access to God.*

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb 10:19-22)

Understanding More

The basis of our communion

How can we approach God?

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb 10:19-22)

From the beginning, when God created man, His desire was to have a relationship with him. However, sin separated man from God. The Lord could no longer have communion with the dead man. But God did not give up on His purpose. Hallelujah. He Himself provided the only means to restore man and reconcile him to Himself: Jesus Christ. He is the new, living, and only way of access to God. This is possible when man repents, is born again, and is justified from his sins through the blood of Jesus.



Jesus is the new, living, and only way of access to God.

Today, we can reach God and have an intimate relationship with Him. This is the truth: God is not far away from us.

It is very important to understand that we do not come to Him through our merits, but through the blood of Christ. Let us never try to approach God through our good works. God could not receive us. Our access is not because we are good. It does not depend on feeling good. It is because of the precious blood of Christ. If we are living a life in Christ, walking in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with Him. We can approach Him with boldness and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience. Hallelujah!!

What to do in the presence of God?

Our Lord knows us better than any man. Therefore, we should not seek artificial ways of talking to Him. On the contrary, the only thing He requires is that we be very sincere and truthful. More so, the text above states: "Let

us draw near with a true heart". He does not like exterior images that do not manifest what we are and feel within us.

But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. (Joh 4:23)

We must be natural in our relationship with God. Do not use beautiful words that are not from the heart. Say what we feel. Declare to Him our love. Tell Him also our weaknesses and our sorrows. Share with Him our joys, giving Him thanks for all that we are and for all we have. Present before Him our anxieties and needs. Praise His name at all times and declare His wonders. Confess our sins and seek to know Him and His will through the Scriptures. Finally, seek to grow every day in communion and total dependence on the Lord.



God seeks *those who worship him in spirit and in truth*

In this booklet, we will deal with three aspects of our relationship with God:

Prayer

Fasting

The Word

May the Lord lead us into full communion with him.

Part 2 | Prayer

Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. (Luk 6:12)

Lesson 3 | Praying without ceasing

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

1Th 5:17; Eph 6:18;
Son 2:14; Pro 15:8.

Help for meditation

What does it mean to pray without ceasing?
Is this possible? Explain what this relationship looks like?
Why does the Lord desire this continual communion?

Catechism

What does it mean to pray without ceasing?

Pray without ceasing. (1Th 5:17)

*To pray without ceasing is to have
an ongoing conversation with God.*

*The Holy Spirit commands us to
pray without ceasing.*

Understanding More

Praying without ceasing

Pray without ceasing. (1Th 5:17)

(...) praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit
(...) (Eph 6:18)

We are facing a very important revelation. The Lord wants to lead us to a very special way of life. Living all the time in prayer, in communion with Him. Brother Lawrence said: "There is no way of life in the world that is more pleasant and more delightful than the continual conversation with God".

Our Lord is with us all the time, and He expects us to speak to Him throughout our day. We can stay in constant contact with Him, making Him the object of our thoughts and the companion of our conversations.



There is no more pleasant way of life than the continuous conversation with God.

The Lord rejoices in the relationship with his bride, who is the Church. He wants our company all day long! He rejoices to hear our voice: "... let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet ..." (Son 2:14). The Lord rejoices at the prayer of the righteous: "... the prayer of the upright is His delight". (Pro 15:8). And how sweet is your company for us too.

What a glorious experience: to spend all day in the presence of the Lord Jesus! Talking to Him all the time and hearing his voice. As we walk down the street, talking about what we see, giving thanks to Him for the day, for the people, for the work, and even for the difficulties. When we come before someone, we ask the Lord how we should act and what to say. Then we hear his voice, guiding and directing us. We depend on Him and ask for His help for everything, from the simplest things, such as preparing a meal or engaging in conversation, to the most important, such as a change of job or a decision about medical treatment. What security! What a joy!

When we are in His presence all day long, there is no room for sin or to do our will. He keeps us from evil and guides us along His way.

He is also pleased that we do not trust our ability or our wisdom. He wants us to seek him and listen to his counsel in all circumstances. Even

for situations where we think we already know what to do. This is the true attitude of dependence that pleases God.

This reality of life is within the reach of all the children of God, and is more than a bliss, it is a commandment.



The Holy Spirit, through Paul, commands us to pray without ceasing

Ivan Baker writes to us:

Pray for your decisions,
Pray for your thoughts,
Pray for every step of your path,
Pray for your meditations,
Pray to control your lips (That the fruit of your lips may be blessed),
Pray when you feel empty,
Pray when you feel full,
Pray when you are sad,
Pray when you are happy.
Pray all the time; "pray without ceasing".

All this may seem childish, but it is indispensable to be guided by God. Paul advises us: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." The Holy Spirit, through Paul, tells us to pray without ceasing.

Let us go through all the activities of our day with the awareness of the presence of God, making silent prayers, which flow continuously from our heart. Brother Lawrence¹ urges that intimate prayer be our last act of the night and the first act of the morning.

Let us be determined to live on this glorious path of incessant prayer and total dependence on God.

¹ Irmão Lawrence, lived in France in the seventeenth century and became known for his experience of walking in the presence of God.

Lesson 4 | Dedicating a special time to prayer

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

Mat 6:6;
Mat 14:23, Mar 6:46, Luk 6:12.

Help for meditation

What does Jesus teach us in Matthew 6:6?
Why do we need a special time of communion with God?
Why did Jesus try to have moments of prayer alone?

Catechism

What do we need besides prayer without ceasing?

We need exclusive, intimate, and solemn moments with the Lord.

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Mat 6:6)

Understanding More

Dedicating a special time to prayer

This is another very important aspect of our relationship with God.

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Mat 6:6)

Although we have a good relationship with God throughout our day, the word of the Lord exhorts us to have an exclusive time for communion with Him. These moments of our day are very special and precious.

During the hustle and bustle of everyday life, we cannot feel completely comfortable talking to our Father, opening our hearts, and, most importantly, being still to listen to Him. It is essential that we have moments of intimacy with the Lord. We will experience an indispensable form of communion with our God.



We need exclusive, intimate, and solemn moments with the Father.

We need solemn moments to know His holiness, to confess our sins and to experience His mercy and forgiveness. We need places of intimacy to worship Him, to pour ourselves at His feet, and to experience His love and comfort. We need special and long times to meditate on Him and His word and to listen quietly to His desirable voice. We need moments to cry out to the Lord, lifting our prayers and supplications.

Jesus and His Intimacy with the Father

And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. (Mat 14:23)

And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray. (Mar 6:46)

Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. (Luk 6:12)

Jesus, despite his extremely busy life with commitments and duties, could not be without moments alone with his Father. Even though He was the Son and knew the Father and His will completely, He could not live without this communion with Him. It was, for him, both a necessity and a pleasure. He certainly waited for the moment in the day when he could step aside for a special moment of intimacy with his Father.



Jesus kept waiting for the moment of the day to have His special time of intimacy with the Father.

In the same way, so should we, despite our many activities, we must prioritize and ardently desire this practice. Luther dedicated a good deal of time to prayer every day. However, on busy days, he would say, "Today I need to pray more, for the day will be full." We often do the opposite; on busy days, we find ourselves without time for prayer.

Let us firmly resolve to set aside a daily, exclusive time for communion with our God.



Prayer is a necessity and a pleasure for us

Lesson 5 | Giving thanks for everything

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

1Th 5:18; Eph 5:20; Psa 100:4;
Mat 10:29-30.

Help for meditation

What does it mean: "In everything give thanks"?

What is the practice contrary to this? To whom we complain?

Why is it right to give thanks to the Lord for everything?

Catechism

What does "giving thanks for everything" demonstrate?

"Giving thanks for everything" demonstrates gratitude and trust in the Lord.

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1Th 5:18)

Understanding More

Giving thanks for everything

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1Th 5:18)

Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph 5:20)

God is sovereign over the earth, especially over His children. All things are under His control, nothing happens without His consent.

Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. (Mat 10:29-30)

Therefore, the Lord is pleased that we give thanks for all things in our lives, both the good and the unpleasant. This reveals a heart of faith before the Lord.

There should never be words of complaint and grievance in our mouths. At any time. Complaints cannot come out of the same mouth as praise. If we praise the Lord when we are together, then, after that, we must give thanks to Him because the bus is running late. This pleases the Lord.

Each people has their own language that identifies them. Complaining is the language of people who do not know God. They complain all day long, about everything. They complain about the heat, the cold, the rain, the mayor, the economy, the job, their husband, their wife, about everything. It's the language of a kingdom without hope. It shouldn't be this way among God's children. He is our Father and cares for every detail of our lives.

When we complain about something, in fact we are complaining about God himself, for He is the one who gives us all things.

∞

We give thanks for everything because the Lord is our Father and takes care of every single detail in our lives



*Our joy does not depend on circumstances, nor
on everything going well.*

As His children, we should thank the Lord all day long; in every little moment. Let us give thanks as wake up, walk, eat, talk, lie down, rest, for a new day, for His goodness and mercy, that we can talk to Him, for breakfast, for the delay of the bus, for those who hurt us, for work, for family, for everything we are, for everything we have and for everything God is.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. (Psa 100:4)

What a life of faith, victory and joy we can experience, when we give thanks to the Lord for everything! There is no better way to live. And there is no other way to please Him.

in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1Th 5:18)

Giving thanks for everything is a commandment. The Lord enables us to fulfill it even when we do not feel like it. In doing so, we please God and our faith increases.

Lesson 6 | Praising from the heart

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

Eph 5:19; Heb 13:15; Psa 104:33; 113:1-3; 150:6;
Rev 4:8; 5:11-13;
Psa 35:28; 63:4; 141:2; 47:1; 150:3-5; 95:6; 2Sa 6:14.

Help for meditation

Why do we praise the Lord? What is our response to His love?
What will it be like in eternity?
What practices do we find in the texts above that express praise to God?

Catechism

What is praise?

Praise is the fruit of lips that confess the name of the Lord.

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.
(Heb 13:15)

Understanding More

Praising from the heart

Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. (Eph 5:19)

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. (Hb 13:15)

Praise to God is the natural fruit of lips that confess His name. It is the spontaneous manifestation of the heart of those who have tasted the Lord's love. We enjoy praising and honoring those with whom we have a loving relationship.



Praise is the answer of our hearts to the love of God.

Praising God is expressing our love to Him. It is giving Him glory and honor. It is exalting Him. It is remembering His virtues and deeds. This is right and meets a need of our spirit. For this very reason we were created. We need to praise the Lord. And this also pleases Him. He receives it as an expression of our love and honor.

The most extensive book in the Bible, the Book of Psalms, is essentially a book of praise. It is a source of inspiration for those who love the Lord..

I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. (Psa 104:33)

Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD! Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and forevermore! From the rising of the sun to its going down the LORD's name is to be praised. (Psa 113:1-3)

Praise and worship in the Heavens

The book of Revelation gives us a foreshadowing of what will happen in heaven. We will spend eternity, along with the angels, praising and worshiping the Lord. Hallelujah!

The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!". (Rev 4:8)

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of

them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!". (Rev 5:11-12)

And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!". (Rev 5:13)

We will give praise, glory, and honor to the Lord for all ages. This is what we will do most in eternity. The pleasure and glory will be full. We will worship Him with perfection. A certain brother said, "If someone doesn't like praising the Lord, they won't like heaven".

Praise and worship today

Even though we will spend eternity giving praise, glory, and honor to the Lord, let us have genuine experiences of praise and worship from now on. This begins with our personal relationship with God. Spend the whole day praising the Lord wholeheartedly, and also have special moments where you pour out yourselves in worship, offering the Lord the purest declarations of love and gratitude.

When we are together, we praise God. This is one of the first things we want to do together. The Holy Spirit himself inspires us to do so. Let us declare His works. Let us exalt His name. Let us give Him all glory and honor. Let us give thanks for all that we have and are.

Let us praise the Lord not only for what He has done, but above all for who He is. Let us praise Him because He is holy and righteous. Let us praise the Lord because He is great. Let us praise Him because He is good. Because He is faithful. Because He does not change. Blessed is the Lord and praiseworthy forever! Hallelujah!

The expression of praise today

Let us learn to be true worshippers. Let us praise the Lord with all we have, in every possible way. Even when we are tired or unwilling. Let us express from the heart, with fervor, praise, honor, and glory to the Lord.

The Bible teaches us various ways to express our praise. We should practice them, without barriers or shame. Let us praise the Lord:

Talking and singing

And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long. (Psa 35:28)

Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works! (Psa 105:2)

Raising our hands

Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. (Psa 63:4)

Behold, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who by night stand in the house of the LORD! Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD. (Psa 134:1-2)

Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. (Psa 141:2)

Applauding

Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! (Psa 47:1)

Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the LORD. (Psa 98:8)

Playing musical instruments

Praise the LORD with the harp; make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. (Psa 33:2)

Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with clashing cymbals! (Psa 150:3-5)

Dancing

Then David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod. (2Sa 6:14)

Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!. (Psa 150:4)

Bowing and kneeling

Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. (Psa 95:6)

We should praise the Lord in our homes, when we are alone and when we are with our families.

Also, when we are gathered with our brothers and sisters, we should praise the Lord in the ways listed above, as simple and true worshipers. We should not wait for the musicians, nor be "handled" by them. At that time,

we are gathered around our Father and our brother Jesus to praise them. We should not be intimidated or worried about our image. Let us be obedient to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!
(Psa 150:6)

Lesson 7 | Presenting prayers and supplications

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

1Ti 2:1; Eph 6:18; Php 4:6; Mat 7:7-11; Eze 36:37; 22:30;
1Jo 5:14-15; Heb 11:1-6; Jas 1:6-7; Jer 29:13; Mat 6:5-6;
2Ch 7:14-15; Luk 18:9-14; Mat 15:25-28; Luk 11:5-10; Jas 4:3.

Help for meditation

What do Jesus and the apostles exhort us to do?

Why does God want us to ask Him if He already knows everything we need?

What principles about prayer do we observe in each of the texts above?

Catechism

What does God wait for before carrying out his will?

God waits for prayers and supplications before carrying out his will.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. (Eph 6:18)

Understanding More

Presenting prayers and supplications

Therefore I exhort first of all that **supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks** be made for all men. (1Ti 2:1)

Praying always with **all prayer and supplication** in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with **all perseverance and supplication** for all the saints. (Eph 6:18)

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by **prayer and supplication**, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. (Php 4:6)

The Holy Spirit, here, urges us to present before God our petitions for prayer and supplication.

Again, we are facing something very important, both for our relationship with God and for fulfilling His will on earth.

Why is it necessary to ask God?

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! (Mat 7:7-11)



Jesus again urges us to ask our Father all the things we need. But why is it necessary for us to ask you if he knows we need it before we ask him (Mat 6:8)? Why should we ask you for something? The answer is simple; God knows all things, but He wants us to ask them. He doesn't want to act alone. God wants to cultivate a relationship of father and son with us.

This is the principle of prayer. He wants His children to work with Him through prayer. Through prayer, we work with God for the fulfillment of His will.

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. (1Jo 5:14-15)

*God does
not want to
act alone.
He expects
His children
to ask Him.*

'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. (Eze 36:37).

In the text above, we clearly see the Lord wanting to be requested by his children. It happens like this:

First: God has a plan. He knows the need of man and wants to supply it. This is His will.

Second: He reveals His will to man, and waits for the prayer of man.

Third: Man asks God to fulfill His will. "Your will be done..." Mat 6:10.

Fourth: God fulfills His will and heeds man's prayer.

What a mystery! The Lord has established a principle: He expects his children to pray before fulfilling His will. How much responsibility and fear come upon us!



God waits for prayers and supplications before doing His will.

So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. (Eze 22:30)

Let us note that fulfillment of the Lord's will can be delayed for lack of prayer. Many things that God wants to do in our lives may not be happening for lack of prayer.

How to pray?

Always according to God's will: 1Jo 5:14-15. God only heeds the requests according to His will.

With faith: Heb 11:1,6; Jas 1:6-7. Without doubting. Without faith we will not receive what we ask.

With all our heart: Jer 29:13; Mat 6:5-6. Not indifferent, hasty or with superficial words.

With contrition and humility: 2Ch 7:14-15; Luk 18:9-14.

Without demands or claims: Mat 15:25-28. Although the Lord is our Father, we cannot have an attitude of demand in our heart, as if he had an obligation to attend us.

With perseverance: Luk 11:5-10. Do not give up. Even if it takes time.

Not selfishly: Jas 4: 3. Not aiming at our interests.

Practical Advice

In addition to praying without ceasing, we must all separate a specific daily time to present our prayers and supplications before God. In that time alone, let us observe some advice:

We should make a practical and specific list of subjects and needs to pray, this helps us not to forget anything important and not get distracted.

When we get distracted, and the thought "flying", we must "bring it back" and then continue.

We can present each subject calmly, detailing it before our Father, giving it all our burden.

In addition to the time of prayer alone, the Lord teaches us to pray with each other. The early church used much of its time gathered in prayer. We must pray a lot together (Mat 18: 19-20; Act 2:42; 4:23-31). Note some aspects of this kind of joint prayer:

Each one must be attentive of the prayer made by others and participate, agreeing. This encourages each other. "Amen" expresses agreement.

One brother should not pray at once for all the subjects he wants, as if he was alone. It should bring one subject at a time, allowing the others to pray for it too, "covering" all the details. Only then should you move to another subject.

Everyone should pray, no one should be silent. And when we praying, speak loud enough so that others can hear.

Lesson 8 | The efficacy of prayer

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

1Jo 5:14-15; Jas 5:16; 1Sa 12:23;
Luk 22:31-32; Joh 17 11-12;
Rom 1:9-10; Eph 1:16-17; Php 1:4-5; Col 1:9-10; 4:12.

Help for meditation

What promises do we find in the texts above? What do they mean?
What is the fruit of Jesus' prayer for the disciples?
Meditate on Paul's practice of prayer for the brothers?

Catechism

What is the benefit of prayer?

Prayer is our most effective work.

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. (1Jo 5:14-15)

Understanding More

The efficacy of prayer

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. **The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.** (Jas 5:16)

Prayer is not just a delight. It is a powerful spiritual resource within our reach. God's work is spiritual, and we cannot accomplish it with material resources.

No one can convert someone. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, and prayer is required for it to happen. No one can keep a disciple from falling. We can only keep and protect disciples through prayer. No one can transform a heart. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, and we need to intercede for it to happen. No one can heal the sick. Only God can. And He commands us to pray so that He can work. No one can give revelation of the Word of God to another. This is the work of the Lord, which happens through prayer.



Prayer is our most effective work.

It goes where we cannot go.

A blank check

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. (1Jo 5:14-15)

What trust we have! What assurance of faith! There is no doubt, all the prayers we do, according to the will of God, are heard and answered.

This is a blank check with no limit. Prayer is a powerful resource. May the Holy Spirit grant us full faith and revelation of the efficacy of prayer. Understanding that when we presenting prayers to God, we are performing our most powerful and productive work. There are countless things to accomplish and needs to be met, waiting for our prayers!

It is important to remember that God answers prayers, but not always in the moment and in the way that we expect or would like, but always according to His will, which is perfect and good.

Jesus prayed for the disciples

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.". (Luk 22:31-32)

Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (Joh 17:11-12)

How could Jesus keep and protect Peter and his disciples? The only way was by prayer. That is why Paul exhorts us: "*praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.*" (Eph 6:18).



*Through prayer,
we guard and protect our brothers.*

Paul prayed for all brothers

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I **make mention of you always in my prayers**, making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. (Rom 1:9-10)

Do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. (Eph 1:16-17)

Always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. (Php 1:4-5)

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, **do not cease to pray for you**, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. (Col 1:9-10)

Paul had the conviction that their faith depended on him praying for them. That is why he worked incessantly in prayer for them. Certainly, the spiritual growth of those brothers and the astounding advance of Paul's work were due to this secret: intense intercession.

In this regard, Paul's testimony regarding Epaphras, his fellow worker, also draws our attention:

Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, **always laboring fervently for you in prayers**, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. (Col 4:12)

Here is a brother who is not very famous, but well known to God, because he strove, continually presenting himself before Him, on behalf of the Colossians and on whom certainly depended all the work carried out by the Lord in that city.

Not to pray is sin

Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you... (1Sa 12:23)

Part 3 | Fasting

Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. (Ezr 8:21)

Lesson 9 | Fasting to God

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

Mat 6:16-18; 9:15; Act 13:23;

Psa 69:10; 35:13; Ezr 8:21-23; Neh 9:1-3; Joh 3:4-10;
Joe 2:12-14; Dan 9:2-3; 21-22; Mar 9:29.

Help for meditation

What does Jesus teach about fasting?

What was the practice of the apostles regarding fasting??

What are some purposes of fasting?

Catechism

What are the fruits of fasting?

Fasting humbles us, gives power to prayer, and makes us more sensitive to God's voice.

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. (Act 13:2-3)

Understanding More

Fasting to God

The practice of fasting

Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Mat 6:16-18)

Fasting should be a normal practice in the life of a disciple, like prayer and generosity. In this chapter of Matthew, Jesus is guiding several normal practices in the lives of the disciples, contrasting with the mistakes of the hypocritical religious. Jesus teaches to give alms (vs.2-4), to pray (vs. 5-15) and to fast (vs. 16-18). He puts the practice of fasting next to the practice of prayer. Fasting is part of our normal devotion to God. It must be something true and spontaneous, the fruit of our love for Him.



Fasting is a normal practice in the life of a disciple, like prayer.

And Jesus said to them, “Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. (Mat 9:15)

Jesus said that when the church was going through the period of the groom's absence, it should fast. This moment is now. We are living the time of the groom's absence. It's time to fast!

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. (Act 13:2-3)

The Church in the beginning fasted and prayed intensely. Before doing anything they sought God, with fasting and prayer. That's why the Holy Spirit guided them so vividly.

What is fasting for God?

Fasting for God is offering him a period of total or partial abstention from food. That is, to choose a period of time in which we will stop eating voluntarily, and dedicate ourselves more actively to prayer.

Note that fasting is not just "starving" or not eating by chance. It's something we do for God. That is why it is important that during fasting we apply ourselves to prayer.



In fasting, we must dedicate ourselves to prayer.

We must also be careful that there is no hidden desire to give the impression of spirituality to others. The fasts that find in us the desire to be seen by men are useless. Let's fast in the most discreet and natural way possible.

We can fast for some specific purpose, for some special situation that we want to present before God. However, we should not fast and pray only when we have a need of this kind. We should have a regular life of fasting and prayer.

What are the Purposes of Fasting?

For individual sanctification: Psa 69:10; 35:13. Fasting is a divine way to improve ourselves. When we fast we are humiliating ourselves before our God. Fasting breaks pride, humiliates the soul and disciplines the body. Fasting separates us from an important part of this world: food. Fasting sanctifies us, "strengthens" us.

So that God may hear us: Ezr 8:21-23; Neh 9:1-3. Fasting empowers prayer. Fasting expresses ardor and zeal for what we ask for, deepens and confirms everything we ask God.

To release the captives and defeat Satan: Mar 9:29. The fasting gives strength and power against Satan. It forces him to release the men who are his slaves. Jesus' statement, that "this caste cannot leave except through prayer and fasting", does not refer to being fasting only at the time of expelling the devil, but to a life of prayer and fasting.

To express repentance and ask God to have mercy: Jon 3:4-10; Joe 2:12-14. Nineveh stopped being destroyed because she repented with fasting and prayer.

To receive understanding and revelation of God's will: Dan 9:2-3, 21-22. We constantly need God's revelation for our lives.

To subjugate the body: 1Co 6:12-13; 9:27. Fasting helps us discipline the body. Body appetites are lawful, but we have to keep them under control. We must keep the physical submissive to the spiritual. Fasting for the disciple should be a normal practice, just as physical exercise is for an athlete.

Types of Fasting

Normal Fasting: Mat 4:2. It is the abstention from solid or liquid foods for one or more days. That is, not eating, just drinking water. This is the most common fast. It is usually not harmful to health. It can last a few days. It should not be done by people with some types of illness. You should start with short periods (24h). You should not eat too much the day before, nor "break" the fast with heavy foods. You should prefer fruits. Fasts for short periods, of one day, can be done during normal work activities, although it is recommended to rest due, and to dedicate as much time as possible to prayer.

Absolute Fasting: Act 9:9; Deu 9:9; 1Ki 19:8. It is the total abstention from food and water. Staying without drinking anything, not even water, for some time. This type of fasting should not be prolonged, as it is harmful to your health. The fasts of Moses and Elijah had done were supernatural (absolute fasts for 40 days).

- **Partial Fasting:** Dan 10:3. A restriction on the daily diet, without a complete abstention. It is a fasting option for those who have some kind of illness and cannot do normal fasting. We can choose some foods that we like the most and go without eating them for some time. Or just eat some kind of food (ex. vegetables and fruits). Another example of partial fasting is to spend a few days eating only bread and drinking water.

Part 4 | **The Word**

Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts. (Jer 15:16)

Lesson 10 | Feeding on the Word

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

Jer 15:15; Mat 4:4; Heb 4:12;
Psa 119:50; 1Pe 1:23; Rom 10:17; 15:4; Psa 119:11;
1Pe 2:22; Psa 119:48; 103, 120, 161; Isa 66:2.

Help for meditation

What does the Word of God represent to you?
What does the Word produce in us?
What is in our heart before the Word of God?

Catechism

What does the Word produce in us?

The Word of God nourishes us, gives us life, produces faith, comforts, guides us and keeps us from sinning.

But He answered and said, “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”
(Mat 4:4)

Understanding More

Feeding on the Word

Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts. (Jer 15:16)

How special is the Word of the Lord! It is unlike any other word we know. The Word of the Lord has creative and life-giving power. It was through it that He created the universe and created man. Indeed, Jesus is the Word itself (The Word of God, in Greek = The "Logos" of God = The Word of God).



The Word of God is food for us. Jesus is the

The Word is food for us. It is a source of life. Through it we also grow in the knowledge of God and of our beloved Jesus. That is why it is another very important means of communion with Him. We must seek each day to have our heart filled with thirst and desire for the Word of God.

What a high and attractive goal to reach the full knowledge of the Son of God and His will! The key is in the Holy Scriptures. The Lord wants to reveal Himself. He expects us to look for Him with all our heart. But this demands willingness, diligence, and sacrifice.

What does the Word produce in us?

For 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. (Heb 4:12)

The Word of God is different from the word of man. Our word produces nothing (sometimes it produces confusion). But the Word of God is powerful and produces life in us.

The word of God:

- . Feeds:

But He answered and said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' ". (Mat 4:4)



A The Word of God is different from any other word. It is powerful and produces life in us.

It vivifies and regenerates:

This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life. (Psa 119:50)

Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever. (1Pe 1:23)

It produces faith:

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Rom 10:17)

It consoles and gives peace:

Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. (Rom 15:4)

Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble. (Psa 119:165)

Guides:

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psa 119:105)

Avoids sinning:

Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. (Psa 119:11)

What is our heart before the Word of God?

Burning desire:

As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby. (1Pe 2:2)

Supreme love:

My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on Your statutes. (Psa 119:48)

Fear:

(...) But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word. (Isa 34:16)

Princes persecute me without a cause, but my heart stands in awe of Your word. (Psa 119:161)

Daily Reading and Meditation

Simple reading

A simple reading of Scripture is already precious food. We should read the Word daily. Especially the New Testament. Rom 15:4; 1Tm 4:13. It is very helpful to have a plan for daily reading of Scripture.

Meditation (Jos 1:8; 1Tm 4:15; Psa 1:2)

Meditation is the quiet reading of the Scriptures in prayer, thinking about them, seeking understanding and revelation. We must do this daily, listening attentively to the Lord's voice.

How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (Psa 119:103)

I rise before the dawning of the morning, and cry for help; I hope in Your word. My eyes are awake through the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word. (Psa 119:147-148)

Lesson 11 | **Being shaped by the Word**

Seeking Revelation

Bible Reading

Col 3:16; 1:28; Act 20:20, 26-27;
Heb 5:12-13; 2Ti 2:2; Dt 6:6-9.

Help for meditation

How does the formation of a disciple occur?
What should a disciple study in the Word?
What problem is the apostle correcting in Heb 5:12-13?

Catechism

In what must a disciple be instructed?

A disciple must be instructed and catechized in the whole counsel of God.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Col 3:16)

Understanding More

Being shaped by the Word

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Col 3:16)

The Word of God is not only a powerful nourishment and source of comfort. It is also a fundamental resource for discipleship formation. In addition to daily reading and meditation on the Word, the disciple need a study plan for their personal formation.

A Disciple's Goal and the Word of God

Every disciple has a goal: become “a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:13). And the Word of God is one of the main resources for moving towards this goal..



*The Word of God is one of the main resources
to shape our lives.*

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. (Col 1:28)

How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house (...) Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. (Act 20:20, 26-27)

Paul was so zealous to teach the whole counsel of God because that was the way for those brothers to come to the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The Council of God

All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for our edification, but we need to be clear about what the essential teachings are for the formation of a disciple, so that we do not get lost.

In the text above (Act 20:26-27), Paul states that he had announced, in three years (v.31), “the whole counsel of God.” Certainly, what Paul called “the counsel of God” was a defined and clear package, with all that teaching of Jesus and the apostles, which was essential and fundamental for the formation of those disciples.

Edification goals

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. (Heb 5:12-13)

We need clear goals in building. Without goals, we get lost, we get tired, and we don't move toward the target. Paul says he wouldn't run without a goal (1Co 9:26).



The apostle had a goal of edification for the Hebrews and a time to achieve it.

In the text of the letter to the Hebrews, the apostle complains about the slowness of those brothers in becoming teachers (masters). He calls them children. We can say that the apostle had in mind:

- . a goal for them: to become teachers (masters);
- . a period of time for them to reach the goal.

Personal Study of the Word

To advance toward the goal, each disciple must, together with their discipler, make a plan for his study of the Word. This plan should include the essential subjects for their formation. It is also necessary to define a time frame for completing this work. The disciple must be diligent and zealous in their study.

The Word in Discipleship

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (2Ti 2:2)

The flow of God's Word must be a strong mark in discipleship relationships. May disciples be washed by the Word of the Lord when they are with their disciplers. Let's not have meetings just to talk about problems and situations. Disciples must have thirst and interest in the Word. And disciplers must be faithful in feeding them and transmitting to them "the whole counsel of God," without diminishing or adding to what they have received.

Catechism

Catechism was a practice of the Church in Acts of the Apostles. It consisted in the oral repetition of teaching, phrase by phrase.

We see the term "catechize" in several New Testament texts, which are translated in our Bibles as "instruct or teach" (Luk 1:4; Act 18:25; Rom 2:18; 1Co 14:19; Gal 6:6). Teaching by repetition is an effective and important way to teach (Deu 6:6-9).

Every disciple should have aim to be "catechized" in all of God's counsel. A "catechized" person is not simply someone who has heard all the teachings. It is someone who, through many repetitions, is ready to speak about any of them. We can practice catechesis in several ways:

- by orally repeating the disciplers' teachings to their disciples;
- by memorizing biblical texts and catechesis from the booklets;
- by orally repeating the summary of the teachings given in the various meetings;
- by repeatedly reading the scriptures and booklets and listening recorded sermons.



Humility is necessary to practice and value catechesis.



How lovely is Your tabernacle,

O LORD of hosts!

My soul longs, yes, even faints

For the courts of the LORD;

My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home,

And the swallow a nest for herself,

Where she may lay her young—

Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,

My King and my God.

Blessed are those who dwell in Your house;

They will still be praising You.

(Psa 84:1-4)