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TEACHING OF FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES
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TEACHING OF FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES

MODULE II

« BEING A DISCIPLE AND MAKING DISCIPLES »

LESSON 1: DISCIPLE AT ALL COSTS

Dear student,

We are happy for the interest that this course has aroused in your heart.

The purpose of teaching the fundamental doctrines of Christian life is to help you find, know, love and serve the Lord Jesus. It is a teaching contained in 14 books in a series called "The Christian Way", by Professor Zacharias TANEE FOMUM.

This second module consists of ten lessons based on the book entitled "The Way of Discipleship", enriched by "Disciple at all costs" and "The Making of Disciples" by the same author. Lesson 1 seeks to establish that God's purpose is to have adopted children who are similar to the only begotten Son, and therefore disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. This module therefore deals with the theme "BEING A DISCIPLE AND MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS-CHRIST".

As you continue this study, we encourage you to read the Bible to verify the truth of what is taught to you. If you don't, this course might be of little use to you. Our quotations are based on the New International Version.

Our prayer is that the Lord will illuminate the eyes of your heart as you move forward and that by the end of the study of the lessons of this module, you will have become a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, ready to make disciples for the Lord Jesus Christ.

May God bless you abundantly!

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LESSON 1: DISCIPLE AT ALL COSTS

INTRODUCTION

The teachings on the fundamental doctrines have deeply marked my life and my service to God, and I have the firm conviction that those children of God who will study these lessons with an honest heart, will never be the same again in their relationships with God and with men.

As for module II, we want to recall that the last commandment the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples before His rapture was: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20).

In recalling this commandment of the Lord, we want to emphasize that the disciples have a special place in God's heart. Many religious leaders are struggling to convert people and add them into different denominations without a concern about growing in likeness to Christ. These "converts" do not conform to the standards that the Lord has prescribed for anyone who wants to become and remain a disciple. They were not converted to the Lord Jesus, but to religious systems.

This lesson attempts to establish through the Bible that in creation and redemption God has only one purpose: To have adopted children in the image of His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The adopted children of God must therefore necessarily become apprentices of the only begotten Son, disciples of Jesus at all costs.

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE FATHER

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified" (Romans 8:28-30);

"And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (II Corinthians 3:18);

"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-13);

"Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all" (Colossians 3:9-11);

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:1-2).

These and many other passages from the Bible clearly show that God is not content with simple converts, but that He is at work to lead converts to become like the Only Begotten Son. Every maturing disciple in Christ is called to participate in this work, each with what he has received from God.

Thus, God's purpose in creation and redemption is to have adopted children who resemble the only begotten Son.

II. THE QUALIFICATION OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The only begotten Son distinguished himself by total obedience to the Father. It is said of Him :

- Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, my God.'" (Hebrews 10:5-7);
- At twelve years old: "When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2: 48-49);
- Learning: "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered" (Hebrews 5:5-8);
- Up to the end: "... rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature[a] of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2 : 7-8) ;
- For the glory of the Father: "I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do" (John 17:4).

The only Son was born to obey the Father, He learned obedience and He obeyed to the satisfaction of the Father's heart: "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:9-11).

All those who are saved in Jesus Christ must submit to Him and learn from Him: "Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did" (1 John 2:6). According to His last commandment, they must become disciples of Jesus Christ and make disciples for Jesus Christ.

III. THE MASTER'S CALL

After His complete and triumphal work of redemption through His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and sat on the throne at the right hand of God, as stated above. We can add: "... I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church" (Ephesians 1:17-22).

The lordship of Jesus extends over all creation, without exception. The winds had obeyed His voice. The trees had heard Him and had submitted to His authority without hesitation. In Jesus' name, diseases still disappear, demons obey and leave. The prince of darkness himself recognizes the lordship of Christ. Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Church.

It is of Him that it is written: "Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20).

This is generally called THE GREAT COMMISSION. The Lord Jesus Christ is qualified, not only to make disciples, but also to command to make disciples for Him. He knows by experience each of our situations, He will not require anything from us that He Himself has not experienced. The Bible says: "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin" (Hebrews 4:14-15).

The Gospel is preached for this King, not for any man or community. It concerns the affairs of God in time and for eternity. It is a commandment of the King of kings. The Obedience must not suffer from any conditionality other than what He has established in His sovereignty. The King of the universe has already ordained, we must "go" for the King of kings.

Our mission is worldwide: every nation is concerned. The blood of Christ has flowed: every sin can be forgiven and blotted out, every sinner can be saved.

The Holy Spirit has been given: every man can be changed and made a disciple of Jesus Christ. We must become disciples and make disciples.

Our training program is what the Lord Jesus Christ prescribed. It's about getting others to observe what we've already obeyed. Discipleship is about getting people to obey what we have obeyed. The discipleship and service to God go as far as each one obeyed the King.

This commission has no break, it continues until He returns. He has committed himself to be with those who are committed to this commission. It is the disciples who are sent. Whoever is a disciple is sent. Discipleship is like recruiting workers for the Kingdom of God. It is a great commission given by the great King to all the disciples for all times.

IV. DISCIPLES, NOT JUST SIMPLE BELIEVERS

A disciple of Jesus Christ is a person reconciled with God for having received the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and who is committed to making Jesus his all. A disciple is committed with all his heart to seek the Lord Jesus Christ by putting aside everything that stands between him and Jesus. Such a person is an apprentice of Jesus, according to the eternal plan of God who wanted to have several children in the image of the only begotten Son.

It is written: "You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ" (Romans 8:9). Thus the Spirit that dwells in the believer is the Spirit of Christ, to help him to seek Christ, to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him and to resemble Him.

The Bible says again: "Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all" (Colossians 3:9-11). Whatever the origin and environment of the Christian, Jesus Christ is God's model and standard towards anyone who says he believes in Him. You must accept to become His apprentice, His disciple.

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:1-2).

These and many other passages from the Bible clearly show that God is not content with simple converts, but that He is at work to lead converts to become like the Only Begotten Son. Every maturing disciple in Christ is called to participate in this work, each with what he has received from the Lord

V. THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE DISCIPLES

Becoming and remaining a disciple of Jesus Christ has a cost that must be evaluated before committing oneself. Here is a summary of the demands that Jesus Himself placed before those who wanted to follow Him. They have not changed over time.

1. The fundamental requirement: a supreme love for the Lord Jesus Christ and for the other disciples:

The old covenant and the new covenant both give the command to love God as the greatest of all. The Bible says: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-38; Mark 12:28-30).

There is nothing we can do with God and for God without love.

2. The things to take away:

➤ Renounce sin:

By dying on the cross at Golgotha, Jesus Christ carried with Him all the sinners of all times with all their sins, so much so that the Bible says that He became sin so that we might become God's righteousness in Him (II Corinthians 5:21).

His atoning death provided all that is necessary to live without sin. The Bible says: "The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God." (I John 3:8-9).

The disciple therefore seizes all the means of grace to enter and grow into a sinless life. Some of these means are taught in lesson 6 of module I, others will be given in the lessons of module III.

For a Christ dead and risen for the sin of mankind cannot lead lovers of sin to glory.

➤ Renounce possessions:

Peter and the other first disciples abandoned everything to follow the Lord (Mark 10:28); while the young man who refused to do so went away sadly to his perdition (Matthew 19:21-23).

Money and possessions claim the devotion of the heart of man just as God does. The solution is to part with it to make Jesus the true owner and you, his steward.

➤ Renounce the beloved ones:

The Lord Jesus Christ said: "He who loves his father or mother more than I is not worthy of me, and he who loves his son or daughter more than I is not worthy of me. This is only possible following a voluntary renunciation of these, to love them by overflowing with the love of Christ.

➤ Renounce yourself :

In Matthew 16:24, the Lord says: "If anyone wants to come after me, let him renounce himself, take up his cross and follow me".

➤ Etc.

3. The things to acquire :

➤ Abide in His Word:

A disciple is an apprentice of Jesus Christ. Reading, studying, meditating His Word is of primary importance. The Bible says:

"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8);

"Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers." (Psalm 1:1-3);

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16-17);

"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the

torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete." (Luke 6: 46-49).

➤ Bear fruit:

The Bible says in John 15:1-2 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."

➤ Etc.

WHAT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED?

Before we conclude this introductory lesson, we would like to recall that the last commandment the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples before His rapture was: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). In recalling this commandment of the Lord, we want to say that only the disciples have a place in God's heart.

Many religious people are fighting to convert people and add them to systems or denominations. But we insist that if these "converts" do not conform to the standards that the Lord has prescribed for whoever wants to become and remain a disciple, they have no place in God's heart. They were not converted to the Lord Jesus, but to the systems or denominations to which they belong.

What must be remembered from this first lesson is simple: the necessity, if not the obligation, of the Christian to be a disciple and to make disciples of Jesus Christ.