

THEME TALKS AND EVENING MESSAGES The main talks developing on the theme, “Go in this Thy Might” shall also be an online input. We look forward to the Lord for impartation and conviction that will remain indelible on the hearts and lives of participants. It will lead us into alone with God, counseling and other onsite programs.

SPECIAL NUMBERS We hope to have song ministrations from across the nations and the centres. All who intend for their singing teams to sing or minister to us during SAYCO must pre-record their songs. The duration for the songs will be 3 to 4 minutes. All who intend to sing on the platform should please send us their pre-recorded songs. Brother Bitrus or Saturday will be on hand to furnish you with further details on this aspect of the meeting.

SEMINARS We are featuring two seminars: Seminar A will be on Marriage, dealing with choice of a life partner and marriage that will enhance the potential of the young, while the second Seminar B is focusing on building healthy relationships that will release the might of the young and not bring damage to his destiny.

PATHFINDERS AND PACESETTERS This will run in the three slots. We shall feature live-panelists of those who right from their youth have started to be pathfinders and pacesetters in their generation. The last slot will be the mission challenge to go and be a pathfinder and pacesetters for the Lord in this generation.



BIBLE STUDY

DISCIPLESHIP IN YOUR YOUTH A Crucial Training To Release Your Might

That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; That our daughters may be as pillars, Sculptured in palace style; That our barns may be full, Supplying all kinds of produce; That our sheep may bring forth thousands And ten thousands in our fields; That our oxen may be well-laden; That there be no breaking in or going out; That there be no outcry in our streets. Happy are the people who are in such a state; Happy are the people whose God is the Lord! (Psa 144:12-15 NKJV)

INTRODUCTION

Today, we are living in a world where there is a deliberate and progressive disconnect between the older and the younger generation. The ancient and righteous path is largely forsaken and termed “old school” by the present generation of young people. This is mainly because the older generation have forgotten or neglected the way of DISCIPLESHIP, God’s way of teaching the younger generation the ways and the deeds of God. It is also because many young people seem not to want to have anything to do with the older generation especially where such people are godly. This is not supposed to be so.

If any nation or family will become exalted to be a praise in the earth, righteousness is the way. And the way of righteousness has to be taught and passed on

from one generation to the next because no one is naturally born righteous. Everyone is born a sinner. Righteousness is only imputed by Christ at one's new birth experience and thereafter, it is learnt as a lifestyle through the process called **Discipleship**.

We will not hide them from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children; That the generation to come might know them, The children who would be born, That they may arise and declare them to their children, That they may set their hope in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments; Ps. 78:4-7

However, the foundation for godly living is better and more easily laid when one is young than in old age. And issues of life are better learnt and assimilated in the days of one's youth.

So, to the young people, the word of God says,

It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. Lam. 3:27

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matt. 11:29

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them": Eccl. 12:1

If your generation will experience God and set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments, **DISCIPLESHIP** is a necessity. You must learn the Lord and learn His ways. However, the yoke of **DISCIPLESHIP** is easier to bear in the days of one's youth than in old age. A time is coming when the yoke will be difficult to bear; and even if you want to be discipled that time, the irreversible damage that has occurred cannot be corrected again.

Therefore, in this Bible Study, we shall examine **DISCIPLESHIP IN YOUR YOUTH**, trusting God that you will go from here with proper understanding to deliberately enter into discipleship relationship now that you are young so as to be able to fulfil the purpose of God for your life and have a long time to do so.

A. WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP?

Matt. 4:18-22; Mk. 3:13-19; Matt. 11:29-30; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:11-14; Gal. 4:1-2

Discipleship, in the biblical context, simply means following Jesus Christ in order to learn of Him and be like Him both in character and in service. It means walking with God as a child of God under a human tutor or guardian (a discipler).

Discipleship is a relationship that brings you teachings and instructions from God in order to frame your life for the future (*Ps. 32:8-9*). There are basically two ways of learning, as we can see in *Ps. 32:8-9*. It is either by obeying direct instructions and teachings or through hard experiences like applying "bits and bridles" to a horse before he could understand and obey. Discipleship offers us direct instructions and teachings for simple obedience.

It is a training of **LIFE** so that you will be transformed into the image of Christ; and it is a training of your **SKILL** so that you will be taught and equipped to serve God acceptably in line with God's purpose for your life, even as Jesus Christ our Lord did.

It is necessary for one to be a child of God before he can be disciplined to be like Jesus. This is because it is only a child of God that has the life of God (*1Jn. 3:8-9*). It is only when one has the life of Christ (the new creation life) in him that he has the potential to become like Jesus. A goat cannot be trained to become a man: they have different nature. It is only a man that can become a mature man. Even so, it is not possible to train a sinner to become a saint. It is first an issue of birth before training can take place. You must be born again to receive the new life (the life of Christ) before you can be disciplined to become like Jesus.

Every child of God is an heir of God, joint heir with Jesus Christ (*Rom. 8:15-17*). It is appointed by God for every heir of God to pass through the hands of tutors and guardians (*Gal. 4:1-2*) where he will receive teachings, instructions and divine disciplinary dealings in order to become what God the Father wants him to be (*Ps. 32:8-9; Lam. 3:27 AMP*).

It is good for a man that he should bear the yoke [of divine disciplinary dealings] in his youth. Lam. 3:27 AMP

*Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matt. 4:19
That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb. 6:12 KJV*

And have you entirely forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his children? He said, "My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you and don't be discouraged when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children." As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children after all. Since we respect our earthly fathers who disciplined us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to the discipline of our heavenly Father and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always right and good for us because it means we will share in his holiness. Heb. 12:5-10 NLT.

For the heirs of the kingdom to be properly instructed and to go through divine disciplinary dealings, God appoints tutors, guardians and stewards to watch over them and administer these teachings and dealings to their lives. His heirs are put under such people and such systems until the time appointed by God, the Father. Every heir of God who hopes to become anything tangible in the kingdom of God must go through this process of **DISCIPLESHIP**.

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Gal. 4:1-2

In a nutshell, this is what discipleship is all about. It offers you the opportunity to receive your portion of God's divine disciplinary dealings under a human hand that will position you for divine approval for your inheritance and to make you a partaker of His holiness. To ignore this is to prove to be a bastard in God's household.

Several people in the Bible who became great for God in their life-time, went through DISCIPLESHIP. Here are some examples:

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Even our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God Himself, went through DISCIPLESHIP in the days of His humanity on earth before He could enter and fulfil the purpose of God for bringing Him into the world. (*Lk. 2:51-52; Heb. 5:9; Heb. 2:10 AMP*)

Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Lk. 2:51-52

For it was an act worthy [of God] and fitting [to the divine nature] that He, for Whose sake and by Whom all things have their existence, in bringing many sons into glory, should make the Pioneer of their salvation perfect [should bring to maturity the human experience necessary to be perfectly equipped for His office as High Priest] through suffering. Heb. 2:10 AMP

Jesus went through DISCIPLESHIP in His humanity, under human hands in the days of His youth. He went under the hands of Mary (His mother) and Joseph particularly from age 12 to age 30; and His life in His humanity was molded under the Law for instruction and divine disciplinary dealings of God so as to bring to maturity, the human experience necessary for Him to be perfectly equipped for the purpose of God for His life. And if God did not spare Jesus Christ His only begotten Son, He will not spare anyone who desires to please God and become useful in His hands.

JOSEPH

In the Bible, **Joseph** was the eleventh son of his father Jacob. But unlike the older ten, he related more closely with his father, receiving instructions, learning his godly lifestyle and living in obedience to his father, which eventually became his personal lifestyle. That was discipleship. It was as he obeyed his father's instruction and went in search of his brothers despite their wickedness to him, that his journey to the throne started.

The godly lifestyle he learnt became evident in him even in his relationship with his brothers. He was able to discern that the kind of life his brothers were living was not right and he often brought their bad report to his father, not minding the consequences. He refused to join the multitude to do evil. He has been disciple into godly living. That became a solid foundation for the great purpose of God for his life.

It is important to note that he could not have been available for such intimate discipleship relationship later in life as easily as he did when he was young. And without that discipleship under his father, He would not have arrived at his desti-

ny; he would have become a piece of bread in the hands of Potiphar's wife. Discipleship is easier and more advantageous when one is young. This time of your youth is the best window of opportunity for you to be discipled for the future that God has for you.

RUTH

Ruth was a young lady when she came under Naomi, her mother-in-law. When her husband died, she cleaved to Naomi because of the God of Israel she saw in her, who also had become her God. She left her people and her personal ambition to follow Naomi even though her situation looked naturally hopeless (*Ruth 1:6-19*). She was available both to help Naomi and to learn the way of God from that elderly godly woman. That was discipleship. God used Naomi to instruct and guide her until the time appointed for her to get married. She was properly guided into marriage and Ruth entered into that great privilege of being one of the female progenitors of our Lord Jesus Christ (*Ruth 4:13-22*).

MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS

The **Virgin Mary** had an Elizabeth to run to, after the angel Gabriel visited her with that strange but good news about the Savior of the world to be born through her (*Lk. 1:26-56*). Elizabeth was an older and more mature woman in the things of God and in that kind of experience. And Mary, a young and inexperienced lady was relating with her, prior to her encounter with Angel Gabriel. When the angel departed from her, Mary went immediately to Elizabeth's house. One could see the working of the Holy Spirit in their midst when she arrived there, which brought a clearer understanding to Mary about what she was passing through. She was properly instructed and guided while there. And Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months before she went back home. That was discipleship.

TIMOTHY

He was a young disciple in Lystra. He had become converted to Christ and was growing as a general disciple among the brethren. His father was Greek while his mother was a Jewess. One day when Paul got to Lystra, the people spoke well about Timothy to him. So Paul got interested in Timothy and decided to take him along as he went preaching from place to place. And Timothy left his father and mother and followed Paul. That was discipleship. Paul decided to circumcise him so that Timothy could have access to be with Paul whether in the synagogue of the Jews or outside. He followed Paul everywhere. He went through thick and thin with Paul. He was taught and properly instructed in the way of the Lord and he passed through many divine disciplinary dealings under the hand of Paul, learning the life of Christ and being equipped for the purpose of God for his life (*2Tim. 3:10-11*). After some years, he became a great instrument in God's hands. He became a bishop over many churches and he carried on God's work after Paul died (*Phil. 2:19-22; 2Tim. 4:1-8*). That was discipleship.

All these and many others in the Bible **were young when they were discipled**; they became like Jesus in their character and they became great instruments in God's hands. And because of the character transformation that they experienced, the purpose of God did not suffer damage in their hands.

Even though old people are not exempted from discipleship, such people will only benefit from it if they are humble and teachable. Moreover, discipleship for them is more of mending their past failures rather than building a vibrant future. Discipleship is better experienced in one's youth. If you go through it now, God's purpose will prosper, and it will not suffer damage in your hands as well.

B. WHY MUST DISCIPLESHIP BE IN THE DAYS OF YOUR YOUTH?

1. You are an Heir now! You need discipleship now!

(*Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:16-17; Gal. 4:1-2*)

i. Have you been born again, born of the Spirit of God in this day of your youth? Then this is the right time to be discipled, in these days of your youth when you are still fresh and flexible. You need discipleship now. Do not postpone it, lest you become hard and unbendable. You have become an heir; not of an ordinary man. You are an heir of God, joint heir with Jesus Christ.

ii However, the heir as long as is a child does not differ at all from a slave. Treasures are not handed over to babes. He neither knows the value of things nor how to use them. He can easily exchange precious things for sweets and biscuits. Instead, what God does to His heirs that are still babes is to put them under tutors and guardians until the time appointed by the Father, a time when they are mature enough to handle their inheritance. Discipleship is the relationship between an heir of God and his tutor or guardian who is entrusted to bring him to maturity. Do not miss it now that you are young.

2. While it Is Day (*Jn. 9:4; Prov. 10:5; Eccl. 12:1-2*)

The day is meant for working, and the night for sleeping. He who gathers in time of harvest is a wise son. But one who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame. Consequently, the time of one's youth is the right time to be trained for life and for service. It is the time for DISCIPLESHIP, the time when the sun, the light, the moon and the stars are still shining bright and are not darkened. The night is coming when no one can work or be discipled for any work.

3. There Are Giants On The Way

There are "giants" waiting to battle with every heir, to see if they can collect his inheritance from him. *Matt. 21:33-39*.

Examples include:

- i. The giant of *hunger* against **Esau**. *Gen. 25:29-33*
- ii. **Joseph's brothers and Potiphar's wife** against **JOSEPH** *Gen. 37 & 39*
- iii. **Shechem**, the prince of the Hivites against **DINAH** *Gen. 34:1-4*
- iv. **Pharaoh** against **MOSES** *Ex. 2, 3, 4, 7-14*
- v. **Delilah** against **SAMSON** *Judg. 16:4-21*
- vi. **Haman** against **ESTHER** and **MORDECAI** *Esth. 3*
- vii. **Goliath** against **DAVID** *1Sam. 17:26, 44-51*
- viii. **Ahab** against **NABOTH** *1Kgs. 21:1-3*,
- ix. **Satan** and the Pharisees against **CHRIST** *Matt. 4:1-11*,

- x. *Satan* against **JUDAS ISCARIOT** *Jn. 12:3-6; Jn. 13:26-27*
- xi. *Modern Giants of the 21st century against the present day heirs* (*1 Tim 4:1-3; 2Tim. 3:1-9, 13-17; Jude 1-11, 20-24*)

Some of these heirs conquered the giants and possessed their inheritance; the stories of their discipleship experience are told in the Bible. Others exchanged it for a spoon of pottage. You will also definitely face the giants in one way or the other. The secret of overcoming the giants that will confront you tomorrow is to submit your life to be discipled today. Through discipleship, you will be equipped for the battle ahead of you.

4. There Is A Time And A Season For Everything

You need to submit to discipleship in these days of your youth because there is a time and a season for everything. (*Ecc. 3:1-2; Lam. 3:27, Ecc. 12:1*)

- The time of the youth is the best time for learning, whether physically or spiritually.
- It is a time of strength (*1Jn. 2:14*), a time when you are largely available to be discipled and a time when you have strength to put to practice, what you learn.
- The time of one's youth is also a time of flexibility of life and a time of adaptability.
- Yet the time of the youth is not unlimited. It is limited, and it will soon end. It is like the dew which appears in the morning, and when the sun is up, it disappears. You cannot be young forever.

Generally, even though you can be discipled any time, the time before marriage is the best time to be discipled. After marriage, marital responsibilities may slow you're your discipleship. Actually, at that time you will enter into another level of discipleship: discipleship for an effective and fulfilling marital relationship. To be discipled into the plan and purpose of God for your life, the best time for it is the time of your youth. Maximize this time of your youth for discipleship.

However, if you wait until when you are old before submitting your life to discipleship, disinterest would have set in. The time of old age is a time of loss of pleasure in many things including discipleship (*Ecc. 12:1*). Proper discipleship cannot take place in such a situation.

Moreover, many things would have gone wrong and many wrong steps taken in one's youth, cannot be reversed; for example, diseases caught while living in sin, diseases of old age, wrong marriage, wrong career, irreversible physical disabilities, etc. Discipleship in old age cannot correct such.

Also, in old age, the number of years to put to practice, the lessons learnt in discipleship and be profitable to the kingdom of God has been greatly reduced. Do not wait until you are old before you submit your life to discipleship. This thy might must be released now that you are young. Gideon was a young man when the Lord sent him to face the Midianites. This training is God's provision for you to be released in this thy might.

CONCLUSION

The Lord Jesus Christ has been waiting for you all this while, to make you and to expose you to divine experiences that will usher you into your glorious inheritance. He says 'Follow Me and I will make you.' And Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me and you will find rest for your soul.'

Discipleship is God's own method of making His vessels, those He will use for His glorious purposes. It is God's method of building, establishing and equipping His children for their future. And it is good for a man to bear the yoke of discipleship in the days of his youth. This is the right time for you to respond to God's call unto discipleship. I pray that you will respond appropriately to the voice of Him who speaks to you from heaven even now in Jesus' name.



HYMN 1. OH LORD MY GOD!

1. Oh Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the works thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the roaring thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

*Chrs : Then sings my soul,
My saviour God to Thee,
How great thou art,
How great Thou art.*

2. When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
And hear the birds; sing sweetly in the trees,
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.

3. And when I think that God His son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin.

4. When burdens press and seem beyond endurance
Bowed down with grief to Him I lift my face
And then in love He brings me sweet assurance
My child for you sufficient is my grace

5. When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration
And there proclaim, my God how great Thou art!

HYMN 2. ROCK OF AGES !

1. Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure-
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

2. Not the labour of my hands,
Can fulfill Thy laws demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
And for sin could not atone;
Thou must save and Thou alone.

3. Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!