



## Growing As Disciples (Section Introduction)

Having taken hold of our freedom in Christ, we now need to concentrate on growing to maturity. In this section we will learn how to stand firm, how to relate to other people and how to stay on the path of becoming more like Jesus.

### SESSION 13: Staying On The Right Path

**Focus verse:** *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:11-13)*

**Objective:** To help evaluate what we believe in the light of God's Word and make adjustments where necessary so that we can stay on the path of becoming more like Jesus.

#### Focus Truth:

If we want to be truly successful, fulfilled and satisfied we need to uncover and throw out false beliefs about what those things mean and commit ourselves to believing the truth in the Bible.

## INTRODUCTION

### The *What Do I Believe?* questionnaire.

\* How you completed these sentences reflects what you actually believe.  
Right now you are living by faith according to what you actually believe.

\*Our view of how successful/significant/fulfilled/satisfied/happy we are.  
God hasn't called you to be an insecure, insignificant, unfulfilled failure!

\* If you don't have the same definition for these eight qualities of life as God has, you may not be living up to your God-given potential and you may be in danger of taking some wrong turns.



The key to staying on the right path is understanding the truth about what success, significance and so on really are (i.e. what God's definition of them is).

In this final session we are going to:

- \* consider the eight areas addressed in the *What Do I Believe?* questions so that you can, where necessary, adjust what you have been believing by renewing your mind (replacing lies with truth).
- \* demonstrate that it certainly is possible to tick a 5 on each item - your ability to do that does not depend on other people or the circumstances in your life.

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## SUCCESS COMES FROM HAVING THE RIGHT GOALS

\* **Success in God's eyes starts with our inner person.**

*"Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health... Just as your soul prospers."*  
3 John 2 (NASB),

\* **It's possible to be a complete failure in the eyes of this world, and be successful in the eyes of God.** e.g. Jeremiah. You can also be a success in this world and a complete failure for all eternity.



**Success is related to goals.**

*"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires." (2 Peter 1:3-4)*

\* **God's goal for your life begins with who you are, on the basis of what God has already done for you.** You are forgiven and on the path of becoming more like Jesus. You already share His divine nature, having escaped (the original Greek is past tense) the corruption in the World caused by evil desires. What a great start!

*'For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.*

*Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall..." (2 Peter 1:5-10)*

\* **God's goal for our lives is to make us more like Jesus.**

- God's primary concern is no so much what we do but what we're like.

- We start with what we believe (faith)

- Our primary goal is to adopt God's character: goodness (moral excellence), knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and Christian love.

- Focusing on developing God's character in our lives will lead to success in God's terms. Peter promises that, as these qualities increase in your life through practice you will be useful and fruitful, and you will never fall.

**A valid basis for a true sense of worth and success and absolutely nobody can keep you from accomplishing it!**

\* You may have thought that your lack of talents, intelligence or other gifts prevents you from being successful or happy. Yet there is no mention in this list of talents, intelligence or gifts.

\* **Your identity and sense of worth are not determined by those qualities.**

Your sense of worth is based on two things: who you are in Christ and your growth in character.

Every Christian can know who they are in Christ and grow in character.

**'Though gifts and opportunities may not be distributed equally, God has equally distributed Himself. Everyone is a child of God.'**

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\* Christians who are not committed to God's goals tend to fail. According to Peter, they have forgotten that they have been cleansed from past sins (verse 9). In other words, they **forget** who they are in Christ. If you have **forgotten** who you are in Christ, what's the best thing to do? **Remember!**

## Success is related to obedience to what God has said.

*"Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; 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 1:7-8)*

\* **Was Joshua's success dependent on other people or favourable circumstances? No.**

His success hinged entirely on one thing: Whether or not they lived according to what God had said. e.g. God immediately put Joshua to the test by giving him a rather unorthodox battle plan for conquering Jericho. Joshua's success depended on whether or not he obeyed God, regardless of how foolish His plan seemed. See Joshua' 6: success had nothing to do with the circumstances of the battle and everything to do with obedience.



**Success is accepting God's goal for our lives and by His grace becoming what He has called us to be.**

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## SIGNIFICANCE COMES FROM PROPER USE OF TIME

**What is forgotten in time is of little significance; what is remembered for eternity is of great significance!**

*"If any man's work... remains, he shall receive a reward." (1 Corinthians 3:14, NASB).*

*"Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." (1 Timothy 4:7-8)*

**If you want to increase your significance, focus your energies on significant activities: those that will remain for eternity.**

\* What does the world consider significant How does it compare to God's Word?

e.g Cup finals capture the headlines, but who won 25 years ago, and who really cares?

Teenagers think a rock concert is significant, but where will the band be 20 years from now?

We keep records and build memorials, but within a generation the deeds have been outdone and the memories have faded.

\* The tragedy is that we may not realise our own significance.

Christians are doing work in God's kingdom that will last forever.

e.g. You may say, "All I do is help with the Sunday School".

Wow, you are teaching the truth! What they choose to believe will have eternal consequences.

That makes it very significant indeed.

Serving in Sunday School may seem like a small thing, but it also frees parents to worship and learn.

**There are no insignificant children of God,  
and there are no insignificant tasks in the kingdom of God.**

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## FULFILMENT COMES FROM SERVING OTHERS

**“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”  
(1 Peter 4:10)**

**\* Fulfilment is discovering our own uniqueness in Christ and using our gifts and talents to build others up and glorify the Lord. Contrary to what the world would have us believe, it has very little to do with our external circumstances.**

**\*Fulfilment comes when we “grow where we’re planted” rather than believing that we need to change some circumstance or person in our lives.**

Illustration: The aerospace engineer starting a Bible study.

*“Do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:5)*

**\* God has a unique place of ministry for each of us.**

- **Fulfilment** is discovering our own uniqueness in Christ and using our gifts to build others up and glorify the Lord.

**The key** is to discover the roles we occupy in which we cannot be replaced, and then decide to be the person God wants us to be in those roles. For example, of the six billion people in the world, you are the only one who occupies your unique role as husband, father, wife, mother, parent, child, friend - no one can be that person better than you.

- God has specially planted you to serve Him by serving your family.

- You are the only one who knows your neighbours as you do.

- You occupy a unique role as an ambassador for Christ where you work.

These are your mission fields and you are the worker God has appointed for the harvest there.

**Your greatest fulfillment will come from accepting and occupying God’s unique place for you to the best of your ability and looking for ways to meet the needs of those around you.**

Sadly, so many miss their calling in life by looking for fulfillment in the world. Find your fulfillment in the kingdom of God by deciding to be an ambassador for Christ in the world. (2 Corinthians 5:20)

**Don’t try to be someone else. Be the unique person that God has made you to be.**

God won’t ask me why I wasn’t Billy Graham. He might ask me why I wasn’t me!

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## SATISFACTION COMES FROM LIVING A QUALITY LIFE

**Satisfaction comes from living righteously and seeking to raise the level of quality in our relationships and what we do.**

Jesus said, *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” (Matthew 5:16)* Do you believe that? If you did, what would you be doing? You would be hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and if you aren’t doing that, then you don’t really believe it.

## Nothing else really satisfies except living a righteous life!

What causes you to become dissatisfied with someone or something? When the quality of the relationship/service/work goes down.

\* **Satisfaction is a quality issue, not a quantity issue.** We achieve greater satisfaction from doing a few things well than from doing many things in a haphazard or hasty way.

\* The key to personal satisfaction is not found in doing more things but in deepening commitment to quality in the things that we are already doing.

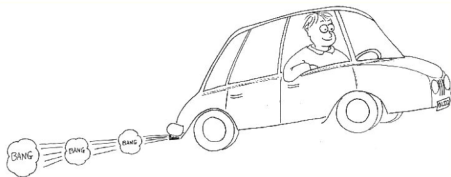
\* The same is true in relationships. If you are dissatisfied in your relationships, perhaps you have spread yourself too thin. Solomon wrote: *"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother"* (Proverbs 18:24).

Satisfaction comes from having a few quality friends who are committed to meaningful relationships with one another. That's what Jesus modelled for us: He taught thousands; He equipped 70 for ministry, but He invested most of His time in the twelve disciples. Out of those twelve, He selected three - Peter, James and John - to be with Him in especially significant times. While suffering on the cross, Jesus committed the care of His mother to John.

That's a quality relationship, and we all need the satisfaction that quality relationships bring.

**Note! Putting right the things that cause people to be dissatisfied does not bring satisfaction.**

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## HAPPINESS COMES FROM WANTING WHAT WE HAVE

### \* **The world's concept of happiness:**

\* We're not really happy until we have what we want.

\* Never has there been a society where people have so many things yet are so unhappy.

\* Why? Because things do not make us happy!

\* As long as you are focusing on what you don't have, you'll be unhappy. But when you begin to appreciate what you already have, you'll be happy all your life.

### **God's perspective:**

*"Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that."* (1 Timothy 6:6-8)

\* You already have everything you need to make you happy forever.

- You have Christ. You have eternal life.

- You are loved by a heavenly Father who has promised to supply all your needs.

(We actually deserve hell!)

(No wonder the Bible repeatedly commands us to be thankful. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

\* **If you really want to be happy, learn to be content with life and thankful for what you already have in Christ.**

\* **We are tempted continually to say, "I want more!"**

e.g. God brought the Israelites out of slavery, gave them clear guidance as to where to go (a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night) and provided regular food for them. What did they say? "I want more!" They complained about everything, even saying that they would prefer to be back in slavery. It's the same in church life! Thanksgiving or grumbling? (Psalm 95:1-2)

\* When we get to Heaven and God asks us how our life was, will we say, "It was OK, but I would have liked a bit more ...."? When He says, "I gave you my only Son," will we say again, "But I wanted more"?

Happy are those who want what they have!

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## FUN COMES FROM ENJOYING LIFE MOMENT BY MOMENT

Fun comes from throwing off inhibitions and being spontaneous.

The secret to enjoying uninhibited spontaneity as a Christian is to remove unbiblical hindrances, such as keeping up appearances. That comes from the flesh and it is “people-pleasing”. Paul wrote that anyone who lives to please people isn’t serving Christ (*Galatians 1:10*)

See the uninhibited joy of King David in 2 Samuel 6: He was so happy about returning the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem that he leaped and danced before the Lord in celebration. He knew there was joy in the presence of God. Compare his attitude to that of Michal, his wife. Ultimately, she was the person God judged in the incident, not David.

**It is a lot more fun pleasing the Lord than trying to please people.**

**\* The joy of the Lord is our strength. (*Nehemiah 8:10*) Is fun the overflow of joy?**

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## SECURITY COMES FROM FOCUSING ON ETERNAL VALUES

\* Insecurity: when we depend upon earthly things that we have no right or ability to control.

\* Insecurity is a global problem:

- God is shaking the foundations of this world.
- There are tough days ahead for this fallen world:
  - an exploding population
  - decreasing natural resources
  - economic meltdown,

**It’s likely that events in the world will shake us and show us where our security really lies.**

**\* We can find real security only in one place: in the eternal life of Christ.**

Jesus said no one can snatch us out of His hand (*John 10:27-29*).

Paul declared that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ (*Romans 8:35-39*) and that we are sealed “in Him” by the Holy Spirit. (*Ephesians 1:13-14*)

How much more secure can you get than that?

Every 'thing' we now have we shall some day lose.

“He is no fool to give up that which he cannot keep in order to gain that which he cannot lose.” (Jim Elliot)

*“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” (Philippians 3:7,8)*

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## PEACE COMES FROM QUIETING THE INNER STORM

Everybody wants “Peace on earth, goodwill towards men”  
A great desire but the wrong goal: Nobody can guarantee external peace because nobody can control people or circumstances.

**\* The peace of God is internal, not external - we need to take hold of every day.**

\* Peace with God is something we already have (*Romans 5:1*).

We can have the internal peace of God even in the midst of storms that rage in the external world.

*“My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27)*

**A lot of things may disrupt our external world because we can’t control all of our circumstances and relationships. But we can control the inner world of our thoughts and emotions by allowing the peace of God to rule in our hearts on a daily basis. There may be chaos all around us, but God is bigger than any storm. “Nothing will happen to you today that God and you cannot handle.”**

**Worship, prayer and interaction with God’s Word enable us to experience the peace of God  
(Colossians 3: 15-16; Philippians 4:6-7)**

**Jesus: the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)**

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## THE FIRST DAY OF THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!

**Walking by faith comes down to making a decision every day to believe that what God says is true and living accordingly by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Has this session highlighted some areas of your belief system that are not quite in line with God’s Word? If so, you know by now what to do: choose the truth and renew your mind.

Truth sets us free and we are transformed by the renewing of our minds.

\* For the rest of your life, as you keep walking along the path of becoming more like Jesus, you will need continually to make a choice to throw out old beliefs and embrace what is actually true, as revealed by God in the Bible. You now have some concrete strategies for doing this. All of us can do it. God has given us the capacity to choose what we believe. If I can believe that what God say is true, you can believe it too!

**Whether or not you feel you are very far along the path of becoming more like God, you can leave here in the sure knowledge that:**

**\* You are God’s child and that He delights in you.**

Whatever your current circumstances, He is intimately concerned in your life and has plans to give you a hope and a future (*Jeremiah 29:11*).

**\* Nothing and no one can prevent you from becoming the person God wants you to be.**

it hinges solely on your decision to adopt God’s goal for your life.

God’s goal for you is to make you like Jesus

\* It’s about your character, what you’re **like** rather than what you **do**.

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**THIS WEEK:** Work out which of the eight areas in the What Do I Believe? questionnaire are the most challenging for you. Spend some time reading the relevant passages for those areas in “God’s

Guidelines for the Walk of Faith" below. You could use them to develop a Stronghold-Buster for the ongoing renewing of your mind.

## **God's Guidelines For The Walk Of Faith**

### **Success Comes From Having The Right Goals**

Success is accepting God's goal for our lives and by His grace becoming what He has called us to be. (Joshua 1:7-8; 2 Peter 1:3-10; 3 John 2)

### **Significance Comes From Proper Use Of Time**

What is forgotten in time is of little significance. What is remembered for eternity is of greatest significance. (1 Corinthians 3:13; Acts 5:33-40; 1 Timothy 4:7-8)

### **Fulfilment Comes From Serving Others**

Fulfilment is discovering our own uniqueness in Christ and using our gifts to build others up and glorify the Lord. (2 Timothy 4:5; Romans 12:1-18; Matthew 25:14-30)

### **Satisfaction Comes From Living A Quality Life**

Satisfaction is living righteously and seeking to raise the quality of our relationships and the things we do. (Matthew 5:5; Proverbs 18:24; 2 Timothy 4:7)

### **Happiness Comes From Wanting What We Have**

Happiness is being thankful for what we do have, rather than focusing on what we don't have - because happy are the people who want what they have! (Philippians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; 1 Timothy 6:6-8)

### **Fun Comes From Enjoying Life Moment By Moment**

The secret is to remove unbiblical hindrances, such as keeping up appearances. (2 Samuel 6:20-23; Galatians 1:10, 5:1; Romans 14:22)

### **Security Comes From Focusing On Eternal values**

Insecurity comes when we depend on things that will pass away rather than things that will last for ever. (John 10:27-30; Romans 8:31-39; Ephesians 1:13-14)

### **Peace Comes From Quieting The Inner Storm**

The peace of God is internal, not external. (Jeremiah 6:14; John 14:27; Philippians 4:6-7; Isaiah 32:17)



## **The Fellowship of the Unashamed**

*I am part of the "Fellowship of the Unashamed."*

*I have Holy Spirit Power.*

*The die has been cast. I've stepped over the line.*

*The decision has been made. I am a disciple of His*

*I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still.*

*My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, and my future is secure.*

*I am finished and done with low-living, sight-walking, small-planning,  
smooth knees, colourless dreams, tame visions,  
mundane talking, miserly giving, and dwarfed goals!*

*I no longer need pre-eminence, prosperity, position,  
promotions, plaudits, or popularity.*

*I don't have to be right, first, top,  
recognised, praised, regarded or rewarded.*

*I now live by presence, lean by faith, love by patience,  
lift by prayer, and labour by power.*

*My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is Heaven,  
my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions few,  
my guide reliable, my mission clear.*

*I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away,  
turned back, diluted, or delayed.*

*I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the  
presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy,  
ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.*

*I won't give up, shut up, let up or burn up  
'Til I've preached up, prayed up, paid up,  
stored up and stayed up for the cause of Christ.*

*I am a disciple of Jesus.*

*I must go 'til He comes, give 'til I drop,  
preach 'til all know and work 'til He stops.*

*And when He comes to get His own,  
He'll have no problems recognising me.*

*My colours will be clear.*

I am not ashamed of the gospel . . . Romans 1:16

The Author of this work is in dispute.

Some say Anonymous, others claim it is by Dr. Bob Moorehead

Others claim it cannot be Dr. Bob Moorehead.

for “I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes..” (Romans 1:16)