

### **Week 3 - What to believe and next steps to take:**

- A. **What to believe** – By various means, God graciously brings growth in His disciples through their faith in Jesus Christ so that they make disciples.
  
- B. **Next Steps** – (Experiences of Relationship with Jesus). I need to continually put myself in a position where Jesus can bring growth (Word, Spirit, Church). I need to trust the Lord in situations that He brings for growth (suffering/hardship).
  - 1. Scripture memory:
    - a. Romans 1:25 “For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.”
    - b. Proverbs 14:12 “There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”
  
  - 2. Scripture reading – John 15-21
    - a. Ask this question when you read a chapter – What do I need to believe about God from reading this chapter?
    - b. If I believe this about God, what will I do or stop doing as a result of believing this?
  
  - 3. Meditation is lingering in contemplative listening, listening to what God has said in His word, resulting in specific obedience to God and His word.
    - a. Meditation of scripture is often a wonderful way to see the Lord and His truth and obey Him.
    - b. Spend time meditating on the verse that captures what you need to believe and how you will obey.
  
  - 4. Pray
    - a. Pray for the people in your life that need a disciple to be a blessing to them.
    - b. Begin to pray for the person/s you will disciple in the next year.
    - c. Continue to journal a couple prayers requests you would like to be praying this week.

### **Some extra thoughts on prayer...**

Matthew 6:7-8 “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. <sup>8</sup>“So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

Before you formulate the thought of a need, before the words hit your lips, before you ever think of asking – God knows. God knows what you need, perfectly knows. We do not pray to inform God about things that He doesn't know. We also don't pray to urge Him to do his duty as though He were reluctant. Lots of words or just the right words or phrases don't work. God is not like that. He is not waiting for you to get the words just right or long enough. He is not manipulated by your volume or your wordiness. God is not like that and any prayer offered on those presuppositions is not what God intends. The kind of prayer that God wants is offered knowing and believing that God already knows what we need. You don't have to spend hours and hours asking the same thing over and over again as if you have to convince God that he should answer you. You do need to ask, you do need to come to your Father and ask. And you can ask more than once and pour out your heart to the Lord. Jesus not telling us to never say the same thing twice. He is calling us to pray but to pray as He wants us to pray. God is gracious and loving and has called us to come to Him and pray but the asking, the praying, must reflect that we know and believe that our God knows what we need before we ever ask it. Luke records another parable of Jesus that might help us with this. (Luke 18:2-8) “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. “There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’ “For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’ ” “Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” God is nothing like this judge. He is not unwilling. He is gracious. He is not uncaring. He cares. He is not unloving. He loves us. He doesn't have to be badgered or convinced, manipulated or cajoled. He loves you and knows what you need before you ask. He knows what is best and right, good and helpful. He has a purpose and in the end, if we pray as He intends for us to pray we will find His answers. We must come to God knowing and believing who He is. And He is the one true God, (Romans 8:32) “...who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with [Christ] freely give us all things?” In His time and in His will, He will reward us for praying as He wants us to pray. Do not lose heart. God knows what you need and He loves you. You can trust Him. So pray. And may He find faith in us, no matter what may or may not happen. Prayer from the right heart that believes the right things about God are so much better than prayers that are full of many words. When we pray, it must come from a heart that fully trusts that the God who gave His Son that we might be saved will be faithful to listen and answer in the most perfect ways.