

# Pressing Forward into 2023 TOGETHER

**Philippians 3:1-14**

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Revelation 3:14-22



## Did We Grow in 2022?

- Did we grow individually? Did we grow as part of THE BODY? Were we instrumental in the growth of brothers and sisters in the THE BODY?
- Did we heed God's warning of Hebrews 2:1?
- Either we grew in 2022 or we drifted backwards!
- We have a fresh start in 2023! Like last year YOU will need a plan! NO PLAN means NO GROWTH. NO GROWTH means HARDNESS of HEART!

## Living in "Dark Ages"

- Did we seriously examine ourselves with the handout of last week, "LIES 'We' Believe"? Or are we comfortable living the "christian" life by our own opinions, traditions, and teachings of men?
- God has promised that "evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3:13) Satan is a master at propaganda!
- Did you seriously examine yourself? Do you believe that it is not necessary to examine yourself seriously? (2 Corinthians 13:5; 2 Peter 1:10)

★ **BLACK & WHITE**

## Review of the SIX "D's" of Discipleship

- Christ's commission to His Church (Matthew 28:18-20)
  - (v. 18) With **all authority** Christ commands His Church . . .
  - (v. 19) The Church is to make **disciples** before baptizing them.
  - (v. 20) The Church is to **teach** disciples to **do all** that Christ has commanded.
- (Matthew 8:23; Mark 4:35-36) "His disciples **followed** Him"
- What is a disciple? A disciple is one who is determined to become just like his master by being disciplined in his studies and obedience. A disciple **follows** his/her master. See John 10:27-29.
  - ① Chosen by the rabbi. (Ephesians 1:4-5)
  - ② Total submission. (Luke 14:33)
  - ③ Meet with other disciples to dialog over Scripture and life.
  - ④ Memorization required. (Psalm 119:105)
  - ⑤ Lively debate, but in the end the rabbi's interpretation was binding.
  - ⑥ Daily interaction with the rabbi.

- ⑦ Goal: to become exactly like the rabbi. Christians, disciples of Christ, imitate Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:1; John 13:1-5; 1 Peter 2:21; Ephesians 5:1-2; 1 John 2:6)
- Christ **commands/demands** His followers/disciples a wholehearted and uncompromising following. (Luke 9:23; John 10:27-29; Luke 9:57-62; 14:26; John 21:22)
- Christ **commands/demands** His disciples to follow Him on His terms. Followers do not set the terms of their following. (Luke 14:26, 27, 33)
- Christ **commands/demands** that obedience to Him must be His disciples' TOP PRIORITY. (Luke 14:26-27; Matthew 10:37-38)
- Christ **commands/demands total submission** to His Word. "IF you continue (abide) in MY WORD, then you are MY disciples." (John 8:31; Luke 6:46)
- Six "D's" of a Disciple
  - **Desire** - a genuine desire to become more than I am.
    - Every disciple is given a new heart from the Lord at the moment of rebirth. That new heart comes with new desires, wants, and attitudes. This new heart causes one to thirst, hunger, and pant after God. It has the desire to please God. (Psalm 42:1; Philip 2:13; Ezekiel 36:26-27)
  - **Determination** - A disciple enters into the race set before him by God with the determination to win - to give it his/her all. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Acts 20:24; Philippians 3:13-15; 2 Timothy 4:6-8)
  - **Discipline** - A disciple disciplines him/herself so that he/she can finish what she/he started. He endures to the end. (Luke 14:28-30; Matt 10:22; 24:13; Romans 12:12; Col 1:11)
  - **Diligence** - A disciple give his/her ALL in growing as a disciple and helping others to grow. (Romans 12:8, 10-11; Heb 6:11; 2 Peter 1:5-8, 10; 3:13-18)
  - **Delight** - A disciple delights in the Lord (Ps 37:4), in His Law (Psalm 1:1-3; 112:1; 119:16, 24, 35, 47, 70, 92, 143, 174), other saints (Psalm 16:3), doing God's will (Ps 40:8), in His Sabbath (Isaiah 58:13-14)
  - **Doing** - A disciple DOES whatever his/her Lord commands. He/she lives his/her life on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. (James 1:22; Luke 4:4; Matt 7:21-23; 12:50; Luke 8:21; 1 John 2:3-6; Deut 10:12-13)

## Pressing Forward into and through 2023

### • HOW TO LIVE LIFE —

- ① **Run to win!** (1 Corinthians 9:24-25) We are to live this life we now live in the faith of the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us. We are to give it our **all!**
- ② **To win we must discipline ourselves.** (1 Cor 9:24-25).
  - Our special diet is the **Word of God.** (Deut 8:3; Job 23:12; Jeremiah 15:16; Heb 5:12-14)
  - Our exercise is the **Will of God.** (John 4:32, 34; Matthew 7:21; 12:50; Luke 11:28; 1 Timothy 4:7-8)

- ③ **We Must Move/Press Forward.** (Philippians 3:13-14).
  - Yesterday is **gone** forever! We learn from our mistakes but do not dwell on them. Our eyes are to be on the goal and therefore we cannot look back! We must focus on our race and not on the other runners.
  - What is the PRIZE that **motivates** us? The Disciple's goal: To be like Christ which is God's predestinated/determined goal for all His children. (Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:2-3) Does this prize **motivate** YOU?
- ④ **We need to look to Jesus as our encouragement and example.** (Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 John 2:6)
- ⑤ **We need to encourage one another.** (Hebrews 10:24-25; 3:13)
  - We do not run as individuals but as a BODY. We die to SELF and serve God and others. (Philippians 2:3-4)
- ⑥ **Lighten our load of anything (good or bad) that easily entangles us.** (Hebrews 12:1; 2 Corinthians 13:5)
- ⑦ **We must run according to the rules.** (2 Timothy 2:5)
- ⑧ **Running will cause pain but pain is part of the running.** (Acts 20:22-24; Philippians 1:29; Acts 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12)
- ⑨ **There is no quitting.** There are **no** breaks or vacations. We run until we finish! (2 Timothy 4:6-8; Hebrews 12:12-13; Hebrews 3:6, 14; Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Romans 2:7-8; Galatians 6:9; James 1:12; Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7)

## Running TOGETHER as ONE BODY

- What is Church?
  - ☆ The Church is the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head and other members as members of the body. Each member **belongs** to Christ **and** each other. (Romans 12:4-5)
  - ☆ The WHOLE BODY moves TOGETHER at the commands of their HEAD!
  - ☆ Church is PEOPLE.
- Is it necessary to BE CHURCH? YES! There is NO TEACHING in the New Testament teaching that one can be a Christian without **servng** in a local body of believers.
- How important is each and every part/member? Each individual member cannot grow apart from the other members. When individual members do not do their part the WHOLE BODY suffers. (Eph 4:16; 1 Cor 12:12-27)

## PRESSING FORWARD: Goals for 2023

- **Running TOGETHER** and not by ourselves. (Romans 12:4-5)
- **Praise and Thanksgiving** for all that God has done, is doing, and has promised to do for us! (Psalm 7:17; 109:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- **AIM to please** God in everything we do. (2 Corinthians 5:8-10)
- **Delight in the Lord.** (Psalm 37:4; Isaiah 58:13-14)
- **Stewardship of the grace** we have received. (1 Peter 4:10-11)

- **Knowing and Doing the Will of God** (Romans 12:1-2; James 1:22; Ephesians 5:15-17; Proverbs 2:1-5; Colossians 1:9-11; 4:20; 1 Peter 4:2; Matt 7:21-23; 12:50)
- **"Imitate me as I imitate Christ"** - (1 Corinthians 11:1; 4:16; Philippians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:9; Hebrews 6:12; 13:7)

**Making a Plan** - without a plan you will not grow as a disciple.

- BE A DISCIPLE.
- Have a real relationship with God.
- Be an active, serving member the Church, the Body of Christ.
  - Be faithful to worship, do not come to be served but serve the body, be an example to others.
- Have a plan to get you through the Word of God in one year.
- Have a daily personal time with God.
- Pray with and for your Church.
- Study with your Church. (Bible studies, catechism, etc.)
- Memorize with your Church.
- Fellowship with your Church.

### **What Does Your Pastor Want for You in 2023**

- ① Your pastor wants you to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:9-10) and NOT the Great White Throne Judgement (Revelations 20:11-15)
- ② He does not want you to hear the words of Christ, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." (Matthew 7:21-23)
- ③ He does want you hear Christ say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter the joy of your Lord." (Matthew 25:21, 23; **Luke 21:36**)
- ④ He want you to do more than what he preaches. (Philemon 21)
- ⑤ He wants you to grow. (Colossians 1:9-11)