

Lesson 51 - The Character of Discipline

1. What body part shows that discipline is not administered only by a good spanking? **Job 36:10**

EGW: (no comment)

2. If one is disciplined in the way of Jesus and become His disciple, what steps are necessary? **Matthew 16:24**

EGW: It should be the determination of every soul, not so much to seek to understand all about the conditions that will prevail in the future state, as to know what the Lord requires of him in this life. It is the will of God that each professing Christian shall perfect a character after the divine similitude. By studying the character of Christ revealed in the Bible, by practicing His virtues, the believer will be changed into the same likeness of goodness and mercy. Christ's work of self-denial and sacrifice brought into the daily life will develop the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. There are many who wish to evade the cross-bearing part, but the Lord speaks to all when He says, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matthew 16:24. {CT 249.1}

3. What if we try to skip the middle step or any step for that matter? **Luke 14:27**

EGW: We are all under obligation to deny self daily for Christ's sake. Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me;" "whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." As we call upon God at every step, pleading for divine wisdom as we advance, seeking for light and grace in order that under all and in every circumstance we shall do unto others as we would that they should do unto us were we in their place, we shall feel the necessity of fulfilling the broad and deep requirements of the holy law of God. Thus shall we lose sight of self, and looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we shall lay upon the foundation deeds of mercy, benevolence, compassion, and love, which are compared to gold, silver, and precious stones, which the fires of the last days cannot consume. The Lord Jesus is our efficiency in all things; his Spirit is to be our inspiration; and as we place ourselves in his hands to be channels of light, our means of doing good will never be exhausted; for the resources of the power of Jesus Christ are to be at our command. We may draw upon his fullness, and receive of that grace which has no limit. The Captain of our salvation at every step would teach us that almighty power is at the demand of living faith. He says, "Without me ye can do nothing;" but again declares that "greater works than these shall ye do; because I go unto my Father." {RH,

October 30, 1894 par. 6}

4. How often are we to follow those steps? **Luke 9:23**

EGW: The Saviour said: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." John 12:32. For the joy of seeing souls redeemed, Christ endured the cross. He became the living sacrifice for a fallen world. Into that act of self-sacrifice was put the heart of Christ, the love of God; and through this sacrifice was given to the world the mighty influence of the Holy Spirit. It is through sacrifice that God's work must be carried forward. Of every child of God self-sacrifice is required. Christ said: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself; and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23. To all who believe, Christ gives a new character. This character, through His infinite sacrifice, is the reproduction of His own. {6T 449.2}

5. To be a disciple, who is such a person to be as? **Luke 6:40**

EGW: The Saviour says, "He that will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." He who will commence at the lowest round of the ladder and ascend, keeping heaven always in view, will become rich in heavenly treasure, God's Word is to him a mine of wealth. By bringing earnestness and self-denial into his ministry, he is making provision for an eternal reward. Those who follow Christ in self-denial will bear the fruit the Saviour bore, and even when their life shall close, the seed scattered by the trees of the Lord's planting will be multiplied to the praise and glory of His name. Men and women who will live the faith in its purity, and consecrate their powers to the development of Christian character, will be a power for good; for the true goodness of unselfish deeds will shine out in their lives. {ST, April 25, 1900 par. 2}

6. Who is our Master? **Matthew 10:25**

EGW: While living in disobedience, man is the enemy of God, and cannot harmonize with those who keep the divine law, and make God the supreme object of affection. They feel that the example of the obedient ones is a rebuke to them. Thus the Jews looked upon Christ. In just the degree that his life differed from theirs, they passed severe censure upon him as a rock of offense. How can we expect the servant to be greater than his lord? "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" "If the world hate you," said Christ to his disciples, "ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Thus the words of Christ are verified, "I came not to send

peace" on earth, "but a sword. {RH, January 13, 1885 par. 5}

7. Who may get in the way of us becoming a disciple? **Luke 14:26, Matthew 10:37**

EGW: Jesus says: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." The words that Christ addressed to his disciples were addressed to us as well as to them. We have presented before us the unwearied conflict that we must wage on this earth as long as time shall last. We can place no person before Christ in our affections. If a person who has been convicted by the Spirit of God smothers his convictions, and continues to trample underfoot the commandments of the Lord, and rejects the truth of God simply because he sees it will bring disunion into the family relations, he shows that he loves the peace that is not of Christ, but of the world. He prefers to be in harmony with the world rather than to be in unity with Christ. But to have the peace of Christ it is necessary to place Christ and his service first. Those who yield their convictions of truth to please father or mother, sister, or brother, husband or wife or children, prove themselves unworthy of Christ. They do not estimate his excellency. They view him not as the Son of God, whom the Father gave for the sins of the world, in order that they might not perish, but have everlasting life; and therefore they shun the cross. But there is a cross to be lifted by everyone who by faith accepts a crucified and risen Saviour. {ST, November 26, 1894 par. 6}

8. What may it cost to become a disciple? **Luke 14:33**

EGW: Wrench yourself away from hurtful associations. Count the cost of following Jesus, and make it, with a determined purpose to cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Eternal life is worth your all, and Jesus has said, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." [Luke 14:33.] He who does nothing, but waits to be compelled by some supernatural agency, will wait on in lethargy and darkness. God has given his word. God speaks in unmistakable language to your soul. Is not the word of his mouth sufficient to show you your duty, and to urge its fulfillment? {CE 117.1}

9. What two things does God's disciples have? **Isaiah 8:16**

EGW: The Lord commands by the same prophet, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." [Isaiah 8:16.] The seal of God's law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares him to be the Creator of

the heavens and the earth, and thus shows his claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was changed by the papal power, the seal was taken from the law. The disciples of Jesus are called upon to restore it, by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator's memorial and the sign of his authority. {GC88 451.3}

10. What are Jesus disciples involved in? **Matthew 9:37-38** [Hint: The word is stated 3 times.]

EGW: "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest" [Matthew 9:36-38]. Our work is plainly laid down in the Word of God. Christian is to be united to Christian, church to church, the human instrumentality cooperating with the divine, every agency to be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all to be combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God.-- Letter 77, 1893. Ellen G. White Estate March 12, 1986. Entire Manuscript. {15MR 311.3}

11. What do Jesus' disciples do that they become as His brother, sister, and mother? **Matthew 12:49-50**

EGW: While Jesus was talking to the people, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him; and one told Jesus. And "he said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." If we are doing the will of God, we are counted as the brethren and sisters of our Master. We are to remember this in our daily life. We are to be in harmony with God, but at enmity with Satan. There is too much fellowship with the prince of darkness. It is not natural for us to bruise Satan under our feet; but we are to close our hearts to the temptations of the evil one, and to open them to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. We are to press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, exerting every God-given power, that we may be overcomers. We must be constantly drawing nigh to God. We must talk of Jesus, expressing his love in a devoted life of entire consecration to his service. The more we dwell upon the purity of the character of Christ, the more we shall desire to become like him, and thus we shall be brought nearer to him. The more we behold his loveliness, the more we shall reflect his divine image. {RH, August 7, 1888 par. 10}

12. Using the physical bread as symbolic of the Word of God, what is expected of a disciple who receives it from Jesus? **Matthew 14:19**

EGW: The Saviour's act in breaking the bread and placing it in the hands of the disciples for them to distribute, returning to Jesus to receive again, represents the very work which is to be carried on in his spiritual kingdom. The treasures of the grace of God are open to his believing agents, and they are constantly receiving light and knowledge to impart to others. Those who freely receive are to freely give. Christ bids us give to all, high or low, bond or free, of whatever caste or nationality. Nothing is to exclude any from the privilege of receiving the precious gifts of heaven. As the loaves and fishes, multiplied by the power of Christ, were given by the disciples to the multitude, so the gift of the precious, saving truth is imparted in rich abundance to all who will pass it on to others and then expect fresh and new supplies from the great Center to bestow upon all. "Freely ye have received, freely give." {SSW, June 1, 1895 par. 4}

13. What will a disciple not strive to become? **Matthew 19:23**

EGW: Jesus here improves the opportunity to give His disciples an impressive lesson: "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." {2T 680.3}

Here the strength of riches is seen. The power of the love of riches over the human mind is almost paralyzing. Riches infatuate many, and make them act as though they were bereft of reason. The more they have of this world, the more they desire. Their fears of coming to want, increase with their riches. They have a disposition to hoard up means for the future. They are close and selfish, fearing that God will not provide for their future needs. Such persons are indeed poor toward God. As their riches have accumulated, they have put their trust in them and have not had faith in God or His promises. {2T 680.4}

The poor man who has faith and confidence in God, who trusts in His love and care, and who abounds in good works, judiciously using the little he has in blessing others with his means, is rich toward God. He feels that his neighbor has claims upon him that he cannot disregard and yet obey the commandment of God: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The poor who are rich toward God consider the salvation of their fellow men of greater importance than all the gold and silver that the world contains. {2T 681.1}

14. What will Jesus' disciples do for the rest of their lives? **Matthew 21:6**

EGW: A true disciple of Christ will seek to imitate the Pattern. His love will lead to perfect obedience. He will study to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. He whose heart is

still defiled with sin cannot be zealous of good works; and is not careful to abstain from evil, is not vigilant and watchful over his own motives and conduct, is not jealous over his unruly tongue; he is not careful to deny self and lift the cross of Christ. These poor, deceived souls fail to keep the first four precepts of the decalogue, defining the duty of man to God, neither do they keep the last six commandments, defining the duty of man to his fellow men. {TDG 291.4}

15. What are Jesus' disciples considered? **Matthew 23:1, 11**

EGW: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Again and again Christ had taught that true greatness is measured by moral worth. In the estimation of heaven, greatness of character consists in living for the welfare of our fellow men, in doing works of love and mercy. Christ the King of glory was a servant to fallen man. {DA 613.4}

16. What character will Jesus' disciples have? **Matthew 23:1, 12**

EGW: Let us then put away all self-exaltation. As long as the cross of Calvary stands as a monument of the cost of our salvation, as a reminder of the amazing love and humiliation of the King of glory, let us walk in its shadow, and seek to reflect the character of our Redeemer. Go to him as a perfect Saviour, for he has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." There is no reason why we should seek to exalt ourselves, for we are full of weakness. As you realize this, trust in him whose grace is sufficient for you, for "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Therefore "humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up;" for "whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Let self and self-interest be lost in the great themes of redemption. "Show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." The Lord says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." {ST, March 9, 1888 par. 16}

17. What are Jesus disciples sent as? **Matthew 23:1, 34**

EGW: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city." Prophets and wise men, full of faith and the Holy Ghost,--Stephen, James, and many others,--would be condemned and slain. With hand uplifted to heaven, and a divine light enshrouding His person, Christ spoke as a judge to those before Him. His voice, that had so often

been heard in gentleness and entreaty, was now heard in rebuke and condemnation. The listeners shuddered. Never was the impression made by His words and His look to be effaced. {DA 619.4}

18. Who do Jesus' disciples believe Jesus to be? **Luke 9:18-20**

EGW: Jesus might have opened to the world door after door of the mysteries of science, and gratified the inquisitive mind; but did He do it? He had one object before Him, as we should have in following His example. It is to bring to the human family the divine knowledge of the Christ of God, to teach them how they may save their souls, and that they may have that life that measures with the life of God. {1SAT 255.2}

19. What would Jesus' disciples be taught to do? **Luke 11:1**

EGW: "And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Luke 11:1. The prayer that Christ gave to His disciples in answer to this request is not made in high-flown language, but expresses in simple words the necessities of the soul. It is short and deals directly with the daily needs. {9T 278.3}

20. What are Jesus' disciples on guard against? **Luke 12:1**

EGW: Months afterward, "when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another," Jesus repeated the same teaching. "He began to say unto His disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Luke 12:1. {DA 408.2}

The leaven placed in the meal works imperceptibly, changing the whole mass to its own nature. So if hypocrisy is allowed to exist in the heart, it permeates the character and the life. A striking example of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, Christ had already rebuked in denouncing the practice of "Corban," by which a neglect of filial duty was concealed under a pretense of liberality to the temple. The scribes and Pharisees were insinuating deceptive principles. They concealed the real tendency of their doctrines, and improved every occasion to instill them artfully into the minds of their hearers. These false principles, when once accepted, worked like leaven in the meal, permeating and transforming the character. It was this deceptive teaching that made it so hard for the people to receive the words of Christ. {DA 408.3}

21. What would Jesus' disciples not worry about? **Luke 12:22-23**

EGW: He then addressed His disciples: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment." {2T 662.1}

These warnings are given for the benefit of all. Will they improve the warnings given? Will they be benefited? Will they regard these striking illustrations of our Saviour and shun the example of the foolish rich man? He had an abundance; so have many who profess to believe the truth, and they are acting over the case of the poor, foolish rich man. Oh, that they would be wise and feel the obligations resting upon them to use the blessings that God has given them in blessing others, instead of turning them into a curse. God will say to all such, as to the foolish rich man: "Thou fool." {2T 662.2}

22. What are we to continue in to stay as Jesus' disciple? **John 8:31**

EGW: These are the words of One of whom even His enemies were forced to admit: "Never man spake like this Man." The words of men express their own human thoughts; but those of Christ are spirit and life. "If ye continue in My word," He says, "then are ye My disciples indeed." "He that is of God heareth God's words," but these divine utterances find no place in the heart of one who is of the world and loves its pleasures. {5T 433.2}

23. What demonstrates that we are Jesus' disciples? **John 13:35**

EGW: When the latter rain is poured out, the church will be clothed with power for its work; but the church as a whole will never receive this until its members shall put away from among them, envy, evil-surmisings, and evil-speaking. Those who cherish these sins know not the blessed experience of love; they are not awake to the fact that the Lord is testing and proving their love for him by the attitude they assume toward one another. Christ says to us, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." When this commandment is obeyed, envy, evil-speaking, evil-surmising, and evil-thinking will not be indulged; they will have no part in the formation of character. {RH, October 6, 1896 par. 9}

This love means growth spiritually. Christ has given an example which his people are to follow. He binds them to one another and to himself by his own divine attributes. Their oneness with Jesus

Christ makes them love one another, for this is the sure fruit. He makes their affection for one another the badge of their discipleship. {RH, October 6, 1896 par. 10}

24. What would Jesus' disciples bear? **John 15:8**

EGW: "Herein is My Father glorified," said Jesus, "that ye bear much fruit." God desires to manifest through you the holiness, the benevolence, the compassion, of His own character. Yet the Saviour does not bid the disciples labor to bear fruit. He tells them to abide in Him. "If ye abide in Me," He says, "and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." It is through the word that Christ abides in His followers. This is the same vital union that is represented by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The words of Christ are spirit and life. Receiving them, you receive the life of the Vine. You live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4. The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits as in Him. Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, you bear fruit after the similitude of Christ. {DA 677.1}

25. What are the disciples of Jesus called? **Acts 11:26** [It points to the fact that if they take that name but are not disciplined according to the ways of Jesus, they are taking the name in vain.]

EGW: It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians. The name was given them because Christ was the main theme of their preaching, their teaching, and their conversation. Continually they were recounting the incidents that had occurred during the days of His earthly ministry, when His disciples were blessed with His personal presence. Untiringly they dwelt upon His teachings and His miracles of healing. With quivering lips and tearful eyes they spoke of His agony in the garden, His betrayal, trial, and execution, the forbearance and humility with which He had endured the contumely and torture imposed upon Him by His enemies, and the Godlike pity with which He had prayed for those who persecuted Him. His resurrection and ascension, and His work in heaven as the Mediator for fallen man, were topics on which they rejoiced to dwell. Well might the heathen call them Christians, since they preached Christ and addressed their prayers to God through Him. {AA 157.1}