



## Sent by God: His People on His Mission

### LESSON 11: Values—Living Like Jesus

#### **Our Values**

Six values guide this church and give us identity. These reflect our mission and shape us as a church. Here is a summary for your reference.

**Truth.** We value truth, we value biblical teaching. This commitment calls us to be *approved workers*.

**Unity.** We value unity, we seek peaceful harmony. We seek unity in God's Spirit as *spiritual brothers*.

**Touch.** Because God wants to touch, love and care for his world, we value caring evangelism. God touches our world through us, his *ambassadors*.

**Christian Living.** To live like Jesus acknowledges that he calls us to be like him, his *disciples*.

**Love.** Our desire to love like Jesus shows in all our relationships, but especially in our commitment to be the *family of God*.

**Ministry.** We want to equip and empower one another, recognizing that all are called to be *servants*.

#### **Our Example: Following in Jesus' Footsteps**

The word Christian means "one who is like Christ."

The basic meaning of the word disciple is "learner". Jesus said that it is enough that the student be like the teacher, that the disciple be like the Master (Luke 6:40). Jesus' call to follow him and become his disciples reminds us that the church is a place for nurturing faith and spiritual growth. At the very center of the Christian life is a commitment to live like Christ. Because we are his followers (disciples), we imitate him.

#### **We are Disciples**

Over the years, something very interesting has occurred in the way we Restorationists identify ourselves. Most of us in churches of Christ prefer the word "Christian". A frequently heard saying among our spiritual forefathers was "We are Christians only, but not the only Christians."

Diligent Bible students already know that the word Christian appears in the New Testament only three times. The word disciple appears almost 100 times.

Perhaps we have shied away from 'disciple' because other branches of the Restoration have adopted this description. Perhaps it is because the word 'disciple' is used primarily during Jesus' ministry and less often during the church era.

Regardless, disciple is a biblical word that says we are committed to living like Jesus. A disciple adopts the teachings of the Master and seeks to be like him. A Christian is one who is like Christ.

#### **Connecting Values and Identity**

When a person values something, it defines and shapes life. A genuine commitment to truth leads to careful study of the Bible with the goal of understanding how it applies to our lives. A commitment to unity not only makes us less cantankerous, it also helps us remember that God through his Spirit has made us spiritual brothers. Likewise, placing high value on the opportunity to touch lives for Jesus leads to an emphasis on caring evangelism.

The study of values can never be far removed from how one understands one's identity. Who am I? Who does God call me to be?

#### **Discipleship and Christian Living**

One cannot legitimately claim to be a Christian without living the Christian life. Imitating Jesus is a big job! But discipleship goes even further—disciples are learners, capable of teaching others what they learn from the Master Teacher. Disciples live out the teachings of the Master, and pass those teachings on. I am reminded of Paul's admonition to Timothy that he should teach those who will teach others (2 Tim. 2:2). This is the very heart of discipleship. Yes, Timothy was to be strong in the grace of the Lord (lifestyle), but he was also to pass the word on.

