

Be Imitators of Christ

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Please open your Bibles.

We're going to read from the book of 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 1.

I'm just going to read that verse today. And here the Apostle Paul writes to the church in Corinth, telling them the following.

1 Corinthians 11, verse 1. Be imitators of me as I am of Christ.

Be imitators of me as I am of Christ. Let's please take some time to pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for your goodness, for your mercy, for your love.

[1 : 24] We ask, Lord, that as we start this morning this discipleship series, you help us to meditate all this time on what it means to imitate Christ, to be an imitator of Jesus.

We pray for your Holy Spirit to work in us, in our hearts, and to put in us the will and also the do.

In the precious name of Jesus we pray. Amen. So today we are starting a seven-week teaching series, sermon series, about the topic of biblical discipleship.

Many of you, a few weeks ago, have taken a survey. So I will encourage you to be here these coming weeks.

And if you're, for some reason, not able to be here, it's good that these teachings are being recorded. So if you missed some, you just go to our website in the church and you're able to listen.

[2 : 55] Because at the end of these seven weeks sermons, we're going to feel that again. And one of the things that you're going to realize as we talk about this is how this is a very practical subject.

We are called to imitate Christ. We are called to be like Christ.

And as the first teaching and sermon of today, that's basically what we're going to talk about. Why?

Why discipleship? And discipleship is for Christ-likeness. Discipleship is for the purpose of Christ-likeness. If you're going to remember a word from today, that's going to be the only one.

Christ-likeness. Christ-likeness. Because everything we're going to talk about in the coming weeks is about that. Christ-likeness.

[4 : 05] Discipleship for the purpose of Christ-likeness. And then we're going to learn ways in which we grow into being like Christ.

Things like Christ-likeness in our prayer life. Christ-likeness in our Bible intake. Christ-likeness in our faith.

Christ-likeness in our faith. Christ-likeness in our faith. Christ-likeness in our obedience to the Word of God. Christ-likeness in our love and fellowship with one another.

Christ-likeness in our faith. Christ-likeness also in our reach into the lost. In our evangelism efforts. So everything is about Christ-likeness.

Growing into being like Christ. And as you can see, this is a very practical issue. Because these are things that we are called to do.

[5 : 06] That we ought to be doing. Not just knowing it, but also applying that in our life. And by the end of this series, my goal is that we move our life a little bit more to the right.

In terms of doing those things, right? That's what we do in this time here while we grow into being like Christ.

We move our life into Christ-likeness more and more and more as we mature as Christians. And what is discipleship?

Discipleship is the process of learning the teachings of Jesus and following, after his example, in obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit.

That is a very important point. It is not through our own strength. It is not relying in our efforts.

[6 : 03] It is relying in the power of the Holy Spirit. Even though the Bible also calls us to make every effort. We're going to see that too. And so that's what is discipleship.

This learning and following after the teachings of Jesus. Following after his example. And in addition to that, discipleship involves the process of making others disciples through the teachings of evangelism.

So in discipleship, there is two components that are very important. Number one, we are Christ-like. And number two, we help and equip others to be Christ-like too.

We are and we help. But those two things are important in this process. And the aim, right, of discipleship is Christ-likeness, as I said.

Remember that word. Because Christ-likeness is the final goal of eternal salvation. What do we read in Romans 8, 29? To be conformed to the image of his Son.

[7 : 12] So as we start this series today, and as an introductory introduction sermon, we are going to go through five things that I think are very pertinent when we talk about the subject of discipleship and Christ-likeness.

The first one is, as I have indicated, discipleship is done for the purpose of Christ-likeness. Discipleship is done for the purpose of being conformed to the image of Christ, of imitating Christ, of being like Christ.

Number two, discipleship in relation with salvation. Number three, ways in which we cannot imitate Christ. Then, discipleship is costly.

And finally, they have restored perfected image of God through discipleship for Christ-likeness. So discipleship for the purpose of Christ-likeness. God's purpose for those that he has chosen for his glory is to be conformed into the image of Jesus.

A very important component of every believer experience of salvation is grown into Christian maturity. Romans 8, 28 says, And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good.

[8 : 40] For those who are called according to his purpose. And the next text in verse 29 tells us the purpose. For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.

Christ-likeness. In order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined, he also called. And those whom he called, he also justified.

And those whom he justified, he also glorified. So discipleship is the process of us individually growing into imitating Christ.

And helping others to do the same. That's our task. We grow and we help others grow. We grow and we help others grow.

So those that truly are in Christ will grow into being like Christ. Those that belong to God do not long for the things of the world.

[9 : 48] But instead replicate the character of Christ in their life. And equip others for the same purpose. In other words, someone who is a disciple will also do and practice what his master did.

And will also assist others to grow in being like his masters. Romans 12.2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.

That by tasting you may discern what is the will of God. What is good and acceptable and perfect. So those that God saved are predestined.

God decided in his sovereign will, right? That they will grow. That they will be conformed into the image of his son. That's a decision that God has already done.

So, consequently, as a result, God's will and desire for his children, for us, is that we imitate Christ. That we do that.

[10 : 56] And in here, the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11.1 encouraged us to do exactly like that. Be imitators of me as I am of Christ.

So encouraging to imitate Jesus should be a constant practice in the member of every local church.

As Christ's disciples, those who are saved by the grace of God do glorify God by pursuing diligently.

Diligently. That imitation of Christ. In everything we do in our life. And that includes everything.

Imitating the ways Christ practiced spiritual disciplines, right? He prayed. He had Bible intake. He had a devotion.

[12 : 02] A life of devotion to his Father. And also imitating the way he obeyed the Lord and he also reached the lost. Ephesians 4.12-16 says how we should be equipping one another into helping one another to imitate Jesus.

To equip the saints for the work of ministry. For building up the body of Christ. Until we all attain to the unity of faith. And of the knowledge of the Son.

To mature manhood. To the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. So that we may no longer be children. Toss to and fro. By the waves. And carried about by every wind of doctrine.

By human cunning. By craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather. Speaking the truth in love. We are to grow up in every way. Into him who is the head.

Into Christ. From whom we. From whom the whole body. Joined and held together by every joint. With which it is equipped. When each part.

[13 : 06] Listen here. When each part is working properly. Makes the body grow. So that it builds itself up. In love. Speaking the truth in love.

We are to grow up. In every way. Into him who is the head. Into Christ. Each one of us has to do our part properly.

Right? Maturity. Holiness. Sanctification. Christ-likeness. All of those are the goal of discipleship. And synonym.

The same thing. And sanctification is both. And at the same time. Positional and progressive. It is.

Positional. In the way. In which we are. Declared. Already saints in Christ. All of us. That are in Christ.

- [14 : 02] Are. Saints. God calls us saints. We are sanctified already. Because. This is one of the benefits.
- Of being united with Christ. His sanctification. Already. We have that in us. So it's positional in that sense. But it's also progressive.
- As. We. Still are. In a fallen nation. Right? We are not still glorified. We are growing.
- Into being like Christ. We are progressing. In that sanctification. While we. While. We are here. But it is very true. The fact. That those.
- That are united. With Christ. And are. Sanctified by him. In a positional manner. Are also.
- [14 : 58] Growing. In sanctification. Into Christ likeness. Into imitating Jesus. In a progressive manner. There is no way. That one thing. Is.
- Without the other. God. Set believers. Apart from sin. Providing the example. Of Jesus Christ. Right? And supplying. The power.
- And resources. In the Holy Spirit. To lead Christians. Into deepening. Maturity. And holiness. He supplies it to. He supplies the power. He makes us. Able.
- To do it. It is impossible. To grow. Into Christ likeness. Without the work. Of the Holy Spirit. In us. Disciples. Are. Disciples.
- Then are. Responsible. For putting. Into practice. The tools. Of sanctification. Also known as. The meaning of grace. The things that we have. Talked about. Right? So.
- [15 : 53] We are. Responsible. For putting. Into practice. Those things. We are. Responsible. For. Praying. Right? We are. Responsible. For taking our. Bibles. And reading it. Every day.
- We are. Responsible. For. Obeying. What the Lord. Has said. In the word. He gave us. The power. To do that. We are. Responsible. For preaching. The word.
- To the lost. We are. Responsible. For helping. Others. That are. In a. Smaller. Stage. Of growing. Than us. All of us. Are in different.
- Stages. We are. Responsible. To help. Those. That are. In a lesser. Stage. Of growing. Than we are. Through. The means. Of grace. These means.
- Of grace. Include. Or are not. Limited. To prayer. Reading. And meditating. On a scripture. Fasting. The mortification. Of the flesh. Right. Which is. Putting a sin. To death.
- [16 : 47] Through. The word. And through. The Holy Spirit. Confession. Of sin. To God. And others. All of this. In the context. Of imitating. Christ. As the master.
- Everything. Is about. Imitating. Christ. Everything. Is about. Christ. Likeness. Remember. That word. That I want you. To remember. And meditate. Christ. Likeness. It is also.
- Important. To point out. How complete. Human. Sinlessness. Or perfection. In the Christian life. Is not possible. In our current. Falling. Falling.
- Nature. Believers. Grow in holiness. But perfection. Is not attainable. In this world. Only Christ. Was perfect. And that's why. Only by faith.
- In the God man. Christ. And his perfect obedience. We are saved. Christ did not.
- [17 : 41] Christ. Did. Sorry. What we could not do. Christ did what none of us are able to do. Which is obey perfectly. Christ was perfect in all things.
- At the same time. And every act of his obedience. Was. Substitutionary. Like he did it for us. In order to fulfill the law. On behalf of his.
- Chosen people. Because we are incapable of. Perfectly fulfilling the law. And perfect. Fulfillment of the law. Is required for salvation.
- And because. Of the fact. That only Christ. Did that perfectly. That's why we are saved. Only by faith. In the one who did it perfectly. In Christ.

Disciples are called to imitate. Christ's character. And obedience. But only through Christ. Work. And substitution. Only. In the context. Of being united with him.

[18 : 38] We can. Imitate him. Only in Christ alone. By Christ's power alone. For the glory of God alone. Disciples can grow. In imitating. His character.

Father. So my goal. And sincere. Prayer. Is that by the end of. Of this series. We are. A little bit more determined. To imitate Jesus.

We. You know. We intentionally. Decide that. And pursue that. And. Make every effort. To do that. That we.

Be more conscious. Of the reality. That being a disciple. Of Jesus. Implies. Growing. Into being more like him. That we diligently strive. And make every effort.

For more Christ likeness. In our life. Christ said in. Luke 6. 40. The following. A disciple. This is Jesus talking. A disciple.

[19 : 31] Is not above. His teacher. But everyone. When he is fully trained. Will be. Like his teacher. My goal.

Is that by the end. Of this series. We grow into praying. More like Jesus. Personally. And corporately. That we. Have a greater passion. For reading. And studying. Scripture deeply.

That we start. Incorporating. A little bit more. The discipline. Of fasting. In our personal devotions. That we. Confront. And hate our sins. More. No matter what type. Of sin it is.

All of us are. All of us struggle. With specific sins. But we are called. To mortify them. Right. And be like Christ. But my prayer. Is that we mortify.

More and more. The sins that we struggle. With. Growing in obedience. To the commandments. Of Christ. My goal. And prayer. Is that by the end. Of this series. We are more. Intentional. In our Christ.

[20 : 26] Centered relationship. With one another. And finally. That we share. The good news. Of the gospel. More frequently. With the lost souls. With the lost souls. And. That are.

Around us. So. It implies. A lot of things. And that's why. We need a few weeks. For all of those things. Right. Point number. Point number two.

Discipleship. In relation. With salvation. And as I said. These are. These are pertinent. Points. That needs to be discussed. In.

In these. Introductory sermons. Because. There is. A very fine. Line. Especially. In this point. Discipleship. In relation. To salvation. With salvation. There is.

A fine line. Between. Discipleship. And legalism. Right. So. It's necessary. To. To. Make. You know. To. To. Clarify. And.

[21 : 22] And. Do something. That I know. All of you. Already know. Here. It is necessary. To mention. Right. Few clarifications. And considerations. Related. To the issue. Of discipleship.

Right. The first one. Is something. That I think. All of you. A great fellowship. Church. Know. But need to be said. Anyway. We should never. Make the mistake.

Of. Believing. That we grow. In imitating. Christ. In order. To earn. Salvation. No. Salvation. Is the gift of God.

We don't. Pray more. For the purpose. Of deserving. Earning. Or gaining. Salvation. We don't. Read a scripture. More. Or fast. More. For the purpose.

Of deserving. Or earning. Salvation. Or. We don't even. Obey more. For that. There's not. Enough. Obedience. We can do. To earn. What God. Gave us. Already.

- [22 : 14] As a gift. We don't. Do that. To earn. Or deserve. Salvation. Instead. Those who are. Already saved. Have the desire.
- To grow. In Christ. Likeness. Have the desire. To imitate. Christ. All because. Of the fact. That God. Have already. Worked in their life. In order. To desire.
- The things. Of God. So it's a result. Of a work. Of Christ. In our life. We disciples. Want to be like Christ. Because of the word. That he had. Already done.
- Gonna read some verses. Jeremiah 31. 33. I will put. My law. Within them. And I will. Write it. Under hearts. And I will.
- Be their God. And they shall. Be my people. Ezekiel. 36. 26. And I will. Give you. A new heart. And a new spirit.
- [23 : 09] I will put. Within you. And I will. Remove the heart. Of stone. From your flesh. And give you. A heart of flesh. And I will. Put.
- My spirit. Within you. And cause you. To walk. In my status. And be careful. To obey. My rules. So you see.
- It is. God. Who causes. Who produces. Who do that. In us. It is God. Who does it. I will put. I will write.
- I will give you. I will remove. I will put. My spirit. In you. It is God's word. For God's glory. God's glory. And even in our efforts.
- To grow in Christ likeness. This effort. And this. Intentional. Desire. Is the result of the work.
- [24 : 07] That the Holy Spirit. Has already done in us. And. What. Is the. I mean. What does that tell us. That. All the glory. Is for God.
- God. All the glory. Is for God. He saved us. And he is also the one. Working in our sanctification. To make us more like. Jesus.
- To make us more like. Jesus. Nobody. Boasts. Nobody should boast.
- Right. It's not a competition. Of who is praying more. Who is reading more. Or who is. Doing this or that more. God forbid us.
- To do that. Because none of us. Can do that. Enough. To earn anything. It's. Just. What we do. As the result of God.
- [25 : 05] Of what God has. Done for us. So the God who saved us. Is also the God who sanctifies. And the Holy Spirit. Produces. Growth. Into maturity.
- And Christ likeness. In his people. First Corinthians. Six. Eleven. You were washed. You were sanctified. You were justified. In the name of the Lord. Jesus.
- Christ. And by the spirit. Of our. God. You were. Washed already. And as we read.
- Right in the. One of the readings. Today from Isaiah. Chapter five. We see how. That. That. Giving. That giving. Of fruit. Right. That.
- Is. All. That is what it's all about. Growing into Christ likeness. Giving. Giving the fruits. Of. Expressing. The mirror of Jesus.
- [26 : 00] In our life. Because of what he has done. For us. We are mirrors. Of the image of Christ. Now. So what we do. Good works. Is the result of what we are.
- In Christ. I repeat that. What we do. Is the result of what we are. In Christ. It is not that. What we are. No.
- It is not that what we do. Is to be. It is to do. Is to be to do. What we do. Is the result of what we are. Christ does not produce. Sorry. Works.

Does not produce salvation. Works are the result. Of receiving the unmerited. Give us salvation. From God. Scripture says. In Titus 3. 5 to 7. He saved us.

Not because of works. Done by us. In righteousness. But according to his own mercy. By the washing of regeneration. And renewal of the Holy Spirit. Who he poured out. On us.

[26 : 55] Richly. Through Jesus Christ. Our Savior. So that being justified. By his grace. We might become heirs. According to the hope. Of eternal. Life. Amen.

Not because of works. But according to his own mercy. Unfortunately. Many throughout the church history. Including in.

In. In. In. In these contemporary times. Have made the mistake of perceiving. Discipleship teachings. In a. In a legalistic. Matter. This is. A terrible mistake. And this is nothing that I want.

Us to. Think about. In that way. Discipleship is not legalism. We do not obey to be saved. Again, our salvation is by grace alone. We read in Ephesians 2, 8 to 10.

Everybody knows this by heart already. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing. It is the gift of God. Not a result of works so that no one may boast.

[27 : 57] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

So you see here, the same Bible passages that tells us that we are saved by grace tells us also that we are created in Christ Jesus for good works.

We are saved by grace to imitate Christ. We are saved by grace for Christ-likeness. We are saved by grace to growing into being like Christ.

That's the purpose of our salvation. And when we do that, we glorify God. The more Christ is reflected in our life, the more we glorify God in our life.

salvation is of the Lord. Psalm 38, salvation belongs to the Lord. There is somebody named J.T. English who says the following.

[29 : 04] He is one of the... has written many books. The New Testament gives us the paradoxical picture that the Christian life is entirely of grace, but that we are also called to grow in that grace.

Grace creates growth. Grace creates growth. Those who have received the grace of Christ also want to grow into being like Christ.

Those who have received salvation by the grace of Christ also want to grow into imitating Christ. So rather than obeying and growing in a legalistic manner, genuine disciples practice what Jesus commanded then out of love for God and for others.

out of love for God and for others. You shall love your Lord with your God with all your heart, your soul, your mind, your strength, and your neighbor as yourself.

Only after being recipients of the gospel by grace from God in new birth and regeneration, then the reception of the gospel creates a desire in disciples to grow in the gospel, consequently resulting in Christians who strain forward, who make every effort, who diligently pursue maturity, training themselves for godliness, holiness, and Christlikeness.

[30 : 41] Point number three, ways in which we cannot imitate Christ. There are ways in which we cannot be like Christ. And this is also pertinent to address as we start today this this biblical discipleship series.

There are ways in which we cannot be like Christ. For example, we cannot be like Christ in his perfect obedience while we are here.

Once we are glorified, we are not going to be able to sin. We cannot sin.

We will not be able to sin. We will not. Right now, we can sin because of our nation. But once we are glorified, we will not be able to sin.

So in our current nation, we cannot be like Christ in his perfect obedience yet. We cannot be like Christ in his substitutionary atonement.

[31 : 49] Right? We cannot be like Christ in his divine attributes. That's very obvious.

Right? He is omnipotent. He is all-powerful. He is infinite. He is omnipresent. He is sovereign. None of us can be like Christ in that way because Christ is God.

And we are not God. We are his creature. But there are ways in which we can grow in being like Christ. And this is in his character. In his character.

In his... In bearing fruits of salvation. At the same time, we as disciples of Christ also grow in obedience until one day in which we will be glorified and unable to sin no more.

Unable to sin no more. While in this life on earth the Holy Spirit works in us, sanctifying us by his power and enabling us to imitate Jesus, Paul wrote in Colossians 1, 9 to 14.

[33 : 01] And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you.

That's the key one. God already has qualified us. Who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption to forgiveness of sins.

God has done it already, brothers. It is God and God alone who qualifies us to grow in imitating Christ in his character and fruits. 1 Peter 2, 1.

According to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the sanctification of the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for the sprinkling of his blood.

[34 : 29] Number four, discipleship is costly. Discipleship is costly. So we have seen so far discipleship for Christ-likeness.

Don't forget that word. Meditate on that. Christ-likeness. Discipleship in relation with salvation. This is not legalism. This is a fruit of the work of God in us that should happen in those that are saved by grace.

Number three, ways in which we cannot imitate Christ and now discipleship is costly. And this is another pertinent point regarding this series, right? As we start, it is not easy to imitate Jesus.

It is not easy to follow Christ. It is not easy. The world is against us doing that.

The devil is against us doing that. Our own flesh doesn't want that. Like, we have a great crowd fighting our growing in Christ, right?

[35 : 45] It's not easy. It's costly. Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 16, 24, if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

In order to follow Christ, in order to be a disciple of Christ, in order to be an imitator of Christ, we need to deny ourselves. Christ-likeness requires self-denial.

Steve Lawson, he's another author, in his writings, asked the following, what will it cause you to follow Christ? And he answered, it will cause you showing to go your own way.

So, you know, it will cause you not going your own way. It will require that you no longer live for yourself. Instead of living for yourself, instead of me living for myself, we live for Christ.

We do the things of Christ. We think about Christ in everything we do. So, following Christ, being a disciple of Christ, imitating Christ, will cause us not to live for ourselves.

[36 : 57] It will cause you holding onto your self-righteousness. It will cause you recognizing that you cannot be good enough or obeying enough or pray enough or do anything enough.

It's only the righteousness of Christ. It will cause you the pursuit of the Word. So, in order to follow Christ, we need to abandon pursuing the things of the Word.

It is one or another. We cannot have two masters because we will hate one or the other, right? In order to imitate Jesus, in order to follow Christ, our mind should not be set in the things of the world.

Our mind needs to be set in Christ, in His Word, in growing into being like Him, in imitating Him regardless of anything, regardless of mocking, regardless of sacrifices, regardless of losing things in this world.

It's costly, but it could happen that we need to realize, and the situations can come that we have to choose, right, between things or Christ, and the disciples of Jesus will follow and choose Christ.

[38 : 15] Following Christ caused all of this, and for many saints, it has also caused their own life, as they have preferred dying rather than denying their faith in Christ. Just a few examples, Polycarp of Smyrna was a second-century believer who was burned at stake, and he told his killers prior to his death, the proconsul's fire lasts for a little while.

The fire of judgment reserved for the ungodly cannot be quenched. So if we have to suffer for Christ, it's temporary.

It's better to suffer temporary than to suffer eternally in a place that you cannot go away from. So that was a very good argument by Polycarp of Smyrna, right?

Perpetuum felicitas, third-century believers, preferred to die in the arena, suffering while being attacked by the wild beasts, and then slain by the sword, rather than offering sacrifices to the emperor and denying Christ.

And I didn't write it here, but actually these people died with their family, with their children, with their parents, with their family, with the people they love.

[39 : 32] And it's not only the way that they did that that amaze me, it's the fact that they did that with joy and glad, like they were dying for Jesus being proud of doing that because they take their life as nothing compared to earning Christ.

And let me tell you something, brothers, many others, Bishop Ignatius of Antioch, another one, another believer from the second century, also suffered for Christ, and look what he proclaimed, now I am, look what he said as he was dying, now I begin to be a disciple, let fire and cross flocks of beasts, broken bones, dismemberment, come upon me so long as I attain Jesus Christ.

This is just a few examples of genuine disciples that had denied themselves and who had necessarily given their life for the sake of Christ. Dietrich Bonhoeffer explained what denying himself in discipleship entails.

He wrote that self-denial is to be aware only of Christ and no more of self, to see only him who goes before and no more the road which is too hard for us.

All that self-denial can say is, he leads the way, keep close to him. He leads the way, keep close to him, regardless of anything.

[41 : 21] Paul, the apostle Paul, says in Philippians 3, 8, Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ, my Lord.

For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ. discipleship is costly brothers and being a genuine disciple of Jesus is costly but at the same time I want to remember you something that Lawson also said.

Those who committed their life to Jesus have gained far more than what they gave up. You will lose your old life but you will gain a new abundant life.

You will lose this world but you will gain a far better world to come. You will lose the passing of pleasures of sins but you will gain far better joys in Christ.

So what we have to gain is a lot better than what we can lose as we pursue our journey into growing and imitating Jesus. Last point.

[42 : 35] This is the last point I want to talk about you today that Christ's likeness Christ's likeness the restored perfected image of God through discipleship for Christ's likeness.

The more we reflect the image of God the image of Christ the more we imitate Christ then we indeed exalt and glorify God in our lives as the purpose for which he created us was to glorify him in our life to be reflectors of him of his glory.

Right? Genesis 127. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them.

We know that right throughout the history there is an author called Hope Hope Hope man that Hope man yeah that you know he he he talked about the doctrine of the image of God and put four things in that he said prior to the fall was the original image after the fall the pervert the perverted perverted image through redemption in Christ which is what we are right now the renewed or restored image and in the future with glorification the perfected image the original the perverted the restored and the perfected the fall in the garden of Eden corrupted the image of God in humanity the current stage of the believers in the church is redemption as believers are being renewed and restored toward the likeness of Jesus right them believers are saved justified sanctified in Christ but as

Christ worked in us he is restoring the image of God through Christ in us and this restoration of being in the image of God is only possible in Jesus Christ in knowing him more and imitating him more so as final words conclusions on final words right we that are saved grow into imitating Christ into being like Christ Christ likeness go with that word today Christ likeness we embrace imitating Christ based on our faith in Christ alone not on any words we might do anything Christ like that we do it is done because of our faith in him and through the power of the Holy Spirit and as I said in the beginning this is just an introduction but we're going to start next week with the ways in which with the practical ways let's say with the things that we're going to ought to improve and which is the way we imitate

[45 : 48] Christ in everything we do including practicing spiritual discipline including pursuing obedience including being a disciple and also helping others to be a disciple and remember these two things right a disciple is a disciple and help others to be a disciple it's not only about us growing in these things it's also about helping others to also grow in these things it's a good thing that we have equipped in here in these seven weeks we can do a lot of equipping if we apply you know those things that we should imitate Christ and help others to grow in two at the same time I just want to remember your two last verses second period to five make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue right after clarifying that we are saved by grace alone the bible in many many places tells us that we as

Christians are not to have a passive life in terms of we just do nothing we are called to do a lot of things in Christ and not only do that but we are called to make every effort as second period to five said make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue brothers and sisters make every effort Christ in Luke 13 24 make every effort to enter through the narrow door this is a new international version of the bible make every effort make make every effort that is what you do what I should do in the process of imitating Christ we should not be passive we should not be giving up to sin to we should be making every effort to imitate Jesus we need to be active diligent and making every effort in growing to Christ likeness this is our part those saved by grace make every effort diligently diligently in practicing godliness is your prayer life growing in

Christ ways if your bible intake growing in Christ likeness way if your obedience growing into being like Christ is your sharing the gospel growing into being like Christ is your love for your brothers growing into Christ love for us so many things but we need to be making every effort into being like Christ at the same time and I say that right we do not rely on strength 2 Peter 2 3 to 5 his divine power has granted us all things that pertain to life and godliness we already have the power through Jesus Christ through his Holy Spirit you may feel weak it's because you're weak I am weak too and I sometimes feel weak too but if we remember by faith what is in us that's a source of strength for us to make every so that's what I want you to encourage you to do to be doers not hearers be doers of the word and not hearers only and may

God help us to be more like him in all the things that we're going to grow that we can grow into Christ likeness and do that for his glory and through his power alone let's pray dear heavenly father we thank you for this time we thank you for this truth that imitating you is what we are called to do be imitator of Christ we ask for your help as we grow and as we learn in the ways in which we can be like Christ as we learn Christ likeness we thank you for the you have granted the power for us to grow into that and especially these six weeks that are coming we are going to learn ways in which we grow into Christ likeness we pray that all of us move a little bit more to the right move a little bit more to the right in terms of growing more and more into imitating

Jesus in the precious name of Jesus we pray amen amen