

Purpose 9

Purpose of the Elders Discipleship Group: To Train and Equip Discipleship Group leaders to lead more effectively.

Key Theme: Purpose.

Key Truth: The 2 greatest tests for every follower to overcome. .

Key Scripture: *Matthew 10:34-39* ³⁴ "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶ and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. ³⁷ "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

The passage above represents the 2 greatest tests to overcome for every disciple who decides to wholeheartedly follow Jesus Christ. They are the Relational Test - who do you love, and the Missional Test - who do you live for? If we are truly going to be wholehearted disciples of Jesus, in action and not words, then we must be prepared to be confronted by these 2 tests and be seen to pass them through the demonstration of our lives.

Jesus goes straight for and after the 2 greatest priorities in our lives which prevent us from becoming His bride. To love another more than Him sees us not being worthy of something. Ask yourself what you are not worthy of, if you love others more than Him, especially in the light of Revelation 3:4 and its context.

Revelation 3:4-5 ⁴ *But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

The position that comes naturally to us before Christ, is to love people because we don't know the Father. As we are born of God our new innate position through the revelation of the Father, is to love Him more than anyone and anything else. The love we are to have for Him becomes second to none and He is our beloved just like we are His. This love position only becomes our reality as we come to know Him more and more. We then find ourselves with His love in us which enables us to love Him more than our self and others, and has us passing this first test of who do we love.

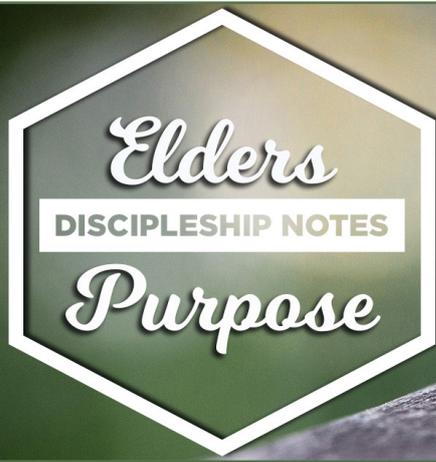
Ephesians 6:24 *Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love.*

The second test is now about who we live for. The challenge in this test is that one must lose his life for Christ's sake and not for his own sake. It's very easy to lose one's life for one's own sake, rather than losing one's life for His sake, because one still has an insatiable need to accomplish things for Jesus, because one doesn't know who they really are in Christ.

The promise of finding the life Jesus has for us is conditional on one losing their life for His sake. This becomes very challenging and starts to put a finger on why we do what we do and the motivation behind all this doing. It also exposes who we actually do it for. Our true motive and ways are brought into the Light, and it is in this place that we either repent of our motive and ways or reject Him and His Way, ultimately rejecting the life He has for us.

This is the second test and it truly tests whether we have actually passed the first test, or whether we are still in love with self and doing it all our own way because we want to be the god of our own lives.

Maybe this is why one of the most important statements in these verses is the first one.



“Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth;”

When we apply our thinking to God’s living Truth, we will always hear and see the wrong thing. We will always prioritise the wrong thing and we will reject the right thing. What we value and think is the most important things to us, will be futile in His eyes and what He values and thinks is the most important, will be viewed as nonsense and foolishness by us.

Unless we have His mind through the power of the revelation of the Spirit, we will fail both these tests miserably and in turn put all of our inheritance at risk. May we all truly be found seeking and asking the Father to bring to light His Word within us, which empowers faith to overcome. His Truth says we overcome by our faith. Faith is our absolute knowledge of Jesus Christ which creates the ability in us to love Him as He commands and to lose our life for His sake, accomplishing His Will. In living from this posture of wisdom we not only pass the tests but we thrive in life now and in the future.

Questions

1. When you hear the word "tests" what is the first thought that comes to your mind and why?
2. Does our Father test us and why does He test us?
3. What is the Father ultimately looking for, for His Son through these tests?
4. What defining role do these 2 tests play in determining this outcome?
5. How does our thinking get in the way of God and His Way?
6. Why is it essential we have His mind in all areas?

Action: What is one thing you may need to put in place from going through this resource?