

WE'RE ALL GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.¹⁷ So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.²⁰ That, however, is not the way of life you learned²¹ when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds;²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:11-24 (NIV)

❖ CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE

1. WORSHIPS God.

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

Matthew 22:37 (NIV)

2. Demonstrates love for God through OBEDIENCE.

Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching.

John 14:23-24 (NIV)

3. Strives to grow in their FAITH.

But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it – not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it – they will be blessed in what they do. James 1:25 (NIV)

4. Lives in a way that HONORS Christ.

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 4:8-11 (NIV)

5. TRUSTS Christ with every aspect of their life.

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.⁸ They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NIV)

❖ LEADING OTHERS TOWARD JESUS

If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.⁷ Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.⁸ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.⁹ This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance.¹⁰ That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.¹¹ Command and teach these things.¹² Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.¹⁴ Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.¹⁵ Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.¹⁶ Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. 1 Timothy 4:6-16 (NIV)

1. **Must first lead YOURSELF.**
2. **LOVE someone else enough to show them Jesus.**
3. **Intentionally INVEST in specific people.**