

# STRIVING FOR THE COMPLETE MAN – Part 1

## Assorted Scriptures

### INTRODUCTION

Last week we looked at the **Demands** of Discipleship and the **Rewards** of Discipleship (Luke 9:23-27)

Jesus began His ministry with emphasis on explaining the Gospel  
→ “Repent and believe!”

He then shifted a greater emphasis on applying the Gospel  
→ “Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me!”

He moved from how to become a disciple to more of what it means to be a disciple.

We understand from last week that the fate of your eternal soul is far more valuable than the entire world. You can **gain now** and **give up forever** or you can **give up now** and **gain forever**.

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Discipleship example – Jesus ministry → the crowds,  
then you have the disciples, then you have the true disciples,  
then you have the 12, then you have the three groups of four,  
then you have the innermost circle of **Peter, James, and John**.

God, you see, uses men to bend history:

→ preachers, theologians, soldiers, workers, disciplers

How did you men come to church this morning?

**Illustration** – Like the hog to the trough?

Shoving and pushing? Parking and pewing?

Did you come just to receive? Or do you come also to give?

Some may even get so caught up in the noble pursuit of giving, that they neglect the nourishment of their soul and do not receive adequately.

Discipleship is not always easy. But it is ALWAYS worth it.

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What is Discipleship?

Discipleship is inviting someone to imitate your life. It is helping someone to live each day, in light of the final day.

**Illustration**– Discipleship is like the patient farmer who plants his seed, then waits patiently, trusting there will be a future harvest.

Christianity, you see, is **personal**. But it is not **private**.

God has not sent you into a disembodied religion.

→ God is the only One Who does not need to be taught.

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So ... what is the occasion here today??

We are taking a break from the Gospel of Luke.

We are beginning an exciting new phase in our Men's Ministry I am speaking to the STBC men this morning.

This is Part 1 of a special 2-part series called: **Striving for the Complete Man**

This was announced at our Men's Breakfast two Saturdays ago and there was another call to leaders yesterday morning. There will be more information forthcoming as announcements, bulletin inserts, emails, hard copy mail, skywriting and smoke signals and anything else you can think of!

So, I will be preaching to the men specifically. We will all see the Word of God shine its spotlight on all of us in these two sermons. The particular application and exhortation in these two sermons are directed toward the STBC men.

These truths certainly apply to the daughters of the Most High God as much as to the sons of the Most High. But based on the evidence of Scripture, it would seem that men are in greater need of forceful exhortation.

It is also good for us to be gentler when exhorting and admonishing women than men.

I want to be able to unleash the full passion of my excitement towards the men unfettered.

So, you dear ladies get to sit back and watch as God gets into our kitchen to shake us up a bit, we hope ☺

Men...let's buckle up.

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**READ Col 1:28-29**

**So That:** “we may present every man complete in Christ.”

**So That:** we may present every **San Tan Bible Church man** complete in Christ.

“**present**” – to present a sacrificial offering

In the Septuagint → **Deut 10:8** – “At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to serve Him and to bless in His name until this day”

By the way, this is the same purpose statement as the work of Christ. **Col 1:22** – “He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—”

**Proposition:** As we launch into our new Men's Ministry, we will be initially embarking on an in depth look at God's man in six arenas:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>I. God's Man in the <b>Mirror</b></li><li>II. God's Man in the <b>Word</b></li><li>III. God's Man in the <b>Home</b></li><li>IV. God's Man in the <b>Church</b></li><li>V. God's Man in <b>Work</b></li><li>VI. God's Man in the <b>World</b></li></ol> |
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We will cover these in depth over the course of the coming year in our men's ministry meetings.

I will skim the surface of these **six areas** today and the next sermon.

Will cover the first two areas today. Next week, we will be blessed to have **Alberto Solano** with us and preaching. Then the Sunday after the Shepherd's Conference we will look at the last four.

The **1<sup>st</sup> Arena**, ...

**I.** God's Man in the **Mirror**

Point – This is who you are. Who you are in secret.

Who you are in your quiet place. How you are when no one is looking.

What are the meditations of your heart?

What are the ponderings of your mind?

What captures your affection?

What occupies your energy?

**→ How disciplined are you?? → What are your daily disciplines??**

You see, we live in a world immersed in superficiality and overindulgence.

A world worshipping the idols of recreation and relaxation.

Discipline is the exact opposite of this.

At the heart of discipline is **denial of self** and **control of self**.

One man said that the future belongs to the disciplined.

There is truth in this statement.

In the book The Disciplined Life, the author writes: *“a disciplined person rises courageously, even heroically, to meet life and conquer it. He resolutely faces his duty. He is governed by a sense of responsibility. He has inward resources and personal reserves which are the wonder of weaker souls. He brings adversity under tribute and compels it to serve him.”*

In the book Disciplines of a Godly Man, R Kent Hughes writes: *“In Christ, spiritual discipline frees us from the gravity of this present age and allows us to soar with the saints and angels.”*

**Proof – Col 1:28-29 – “we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.”**

- In the original Greek - πάντα ἄνθρωπον means men and women.
- The application today is men
- Appears 3 times!
- universal invitation AND ministry of all believers!

### **The truth of God is for all the people of God**

Each member of the body of Christ has a vital and equal in worth role in the proper function and operation of the body.

Men, if you have been reconciled to Christ, then you have been called to the ministry of reconciliation. If you have been made a disciple, then you are commanded to make disciples. **“every man”**

Paul gives a very clear goal - Purpose Statement

– “**so that (ἵνα) we may present every man complete in Christ”**

- te,leioj – translated from original language as ‘perfect, complete, mature’ – the context here ‘complete’

Point – Spiritual maturity – growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus as Lord and Savior

Proof – **1 Kgs 8:61** – “Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day.” (same Greek word in the LXX translated as ‘complete’ - teleios)

**Gen 6:9** – “Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.” (same Greek word in the LXX translated as ‘complete’ - *teleios*)

**Heb 5:14-6:1a** – “solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. <sup>6:1a</sup>Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity,” (*teleios*)

**Application**– sanctification, purification, maturation

We live in a time where there is a willingness to accept everything without question.

**Martin Luther** – *“If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ.*

*Where the battle rages there the loyalty of the soldier is proven.”*

**Point** - Discipline for the Christian is the relentless pursuit of holiness. Discipline is bringing desires and emotions under the control of God.

Godly discipline submits to the authority of the Word of God rather than following the siren song of: impulse, desire, and pressure.

**Proof** – **1 Tim 4:7** – “have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;”

- *gymna,zw* – origin of “gymnasium” from that Greek word

Paul uses this word pictures to describe the intense training and self-sacrifice of an athlete.

- Just as the athlete exerts to the fullest, in the same way, you exert to the fullest
- Just as the athlete frees himself from every burden, so must you
- Just as the athlete has his eye on the goal to win the race/contest, so also you men MUST RUN TO WIN

President **Eisenhower** – *“There are no victories at discount prices.”*

Let me ask you, how do you employ your free time after work, meals, and sleep? This will determine if you are a man of mediocrity or a man with whom to be reckoned.

**Illustration – David Livingstone** began working when he was 10 years old. He worked in a cotton mill in Scotland from six in the morning until eight at night. He purposefully used his “free time” to master Latin before he was 16. He earned a medical degree and a degree in theology by the age of 27.

**Illustration – Martin Luther** wrote: *“work, work from early till late. In fact, I have so much to do that I shall spend the first 3 hours in prayer.”*

There are no disciplined people, you see, who did not pay a price. Discipline requires sacrifice.

I would say this → if a man is not disciplined in his personal life how can he expect to be disciplined in his spiritual life??

**Paul** wrote **1 Cor 9:25** – “everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.”

The goal of discipline? → “for the purpose of godliness”

So how do we do this when faced with the demands and pressures of life?

**Illustration** – David → **Psa 55:16-17a** – “As for me, I shall call upon God, and the LORD will save me. <sup>17</sup>Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur,”

David’s prayer is **powerful**

- “And the LORD will save me ... And He will hear my voice”

David’s prayer is **persistent**

- “Evening and morning and at noon”
- The day for the Israelite begins in the evening → all day long

**Application** – Men, when your window is opened towards heaven, the windows of heaven are open toward you!

→ Have a pleading heart and God will have a plentiful hand.

**Robert Murray M’Cheyne** – “*What a man is on his knees before God, that he is and nothing more.*”

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Now, in the context of discipleship, a disciplee might complain there is deficiency in his discipler. He is not mature enough. He is too young. Or he is too old... I mean, I want an older man ... but not that old ☺

He’s not good enough. He is lacking something. So ... your discipler is lacking ... well ... so are you ☺

→ God is the only perfect one in this equation.

You see, you have to humble yourself to be disciplined.  
... and ... you have to humble yourself to disciple.

Discipleship does not need to begin with a doctrinal dissertation on the Trinity. It can begin with just telling what you know. Tell what you learned this morning.

The **2<sup>nd</sup> Arena**, ...

**II.** God’s Man in the **Word**

Point – What was it that animated Paul? What was his purpose?  
What was his goal? What was his aim?

At the heart of any discipleship → the *sine qua non*, the **irreducible minimum** of discipleship is that we proclaim Christ!

This is Paul's point in **Col 1:28!!** – “we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.”

Paul's strategy is twofold – to make God's Word fully known and to make God's people fully grown.

How glorious Jesus is that the mere proclamation of His person and work sanctifies people and makes them more like Him.

That was the turning point in **Luke 9:18-27** – Christ's person and work.

This proclamation of Christ makes us do what we love and get away from what we hate. We do what we want, because we do what we love. We want what we love, because what we want glorifies Christ.

So, where do we go to perceive, to see, and to receive this glory? The Word!

**Application** – Men, you must feed constantly on the Word of God!

**Illustration** – What do you feed yourself? What does your diet look like? Do you eat only: cotton candy, Captain Crunch cereal, fried chicken and ketchup? → No!

**Application** – In the same way, you want to grow in wisdom and stature. Chin up, back straight, and chest out.

Tell your sons this.

Tell yourself this every morning spiritually speaking.

Proof – **1 Tim 4:6** – “In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.” → Receiving and giving!!!  
→ Discipleship is a two-way street!!!

“**constantly nourished**” – continuous process – daily nourishing

**Application** – Men, you will never do this on one injection a week. You will never do this just rolling in here on Sunday and then not opening your Bible the rest of the week.

You must continue to nourish yourself spiritually in the truths of the faith and the good teaching if you are going to be “**a good servant of Christ Jesus.**”

The truth that burns on Sunday can become icy cold by Monday.

**J.C. Ryle** – “*Sins begin like cobwebs but become iron clamps.*”

**Spurgeon** – “*A man may escape from external confusions, but how shall he fly from himself? If he be out of the reach of all the blood suckers on earth, and all the furies in hell, yet be dogged and haunted with his own turbulent, ungovernable thoughts, he needs no other tormentors.*”

There is one way to be nourished spiritually → a diet of the Word

**Application** – If we do not read the Word, memorize the Word, and meditate on the Word daily, if we don’t delight in the Word daily,

→ We will be poor servants of Christ Jesus.

→ We will be fragile, easily deceived and easily paralyzed by trouble.

→ We will be stuck in mediocrity.

But if we read the Word, memorize the Word, and meditate on the Word, then we will be like strong trees planted by streams

of water that bring forth fruit. Our leaves won't wither in the drought and we will be productive for Christ!

**Illustration** – How does a bee make honey? It is not the bee's touching of the flower that gathers honey. It is her abiding for a time upon the flower that draws out the sweet nectar.

**Application** – In the same way, men, it is not the man who merely touches the life-giving Word of God who produces the sweet nectar of holiness. It is the man who reads, who meditates, like the cow chewing her cud, who will prove the choicest, sweetest, wisest, and strongest man of God.

**Application** – Men, beat the path to God daily.  
Beat the path to God while you have light.  
Night may come when you will not see the way.  
Beat the path to God in his Word every day.  
Make the path well-worn.

Then, when you are weak and the darkness falls, your body will find its way home through the evening mist to food and refreshment.

Be men deep in the Word of God – Be expository men!

STBC will be shaped on the backs of men who follow Paul's charge to Timothy in **2 Tim 2:2** – “the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”

**Application** – Men, what if we treated our Bibles the way we treat our smartphones? What if we...  
...carried it with us everywhere?  
...turned back to get it if we forgot it?  
...checked it for messages throughout the day?  
...used it in case of an emergency?  
...spent an hour or more using it each day?

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Proclaiming Christ is a struggle. It is a battle. It is a war. This is the cost of true discipleship.

Army historian **Brigadier General S. L. A. Marshall** conducted more than four hundred interviews with American infantrymen immediately after World War II. He concluded that the main motivation for a soldier to fight is a sense of unity with his fellow soldiers. He wrote: *“One of the simplest truths of war that ... enables a ... soldier to keep going with his weapons is the near presence or presumed presence of a comrade.”*

In the same way, as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another”

## CONCLUSION

**Application** – Men, never forget → God has called you to a great role in the lives of other men.

**Spurgeon** – *“I am occupied in my small way, as Mr. Great-heart was employed in Bunyan’s day. I do not compare myself with that champion, but I am in the same line of business. I am engaged in personally-conducted tours to Heaven ... It is my business, as best I can, to kill dragons, and cut off giants’ heads, and lead on the timid and trembling.”*

Men, it is time for us to be men!

**1 Cor 16:13** – “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”

By the way, if you are here this morning trusting in Christ, it is because the early disciples obeyed Jesus’ Great Commission to make disciples, teaching them to keep all He has commanded.

## Illustration – Deut 6:1-9

Men, the **torch** is now passed on to you.  
Who will teach our children?  
Who will teach our children’s children?

Now, some of you may rightly be thinking “Well, I’m going to teach my children the things of the Lord. And my children will teach my children’s children.” That is wonderful.

But there are other needs.

**Illustration** – Let me use myself as an example. I was not raised in a Christian household. So, if other men had not been passing the torch on and into my life, I would not know the Lord and I certainly would not be standing in this pulpit.

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“**every man**” – We are praying for men, some of whom have never attended or connected with other men in the church, to step out and pursue together the prize;  
→ “that we may present every man complete in Christ.”

Join us, Saturday morning, March 16<sup>th</sup>, for Men’s Ministry Kickoff – beginning a new exciting phase – at 6am, right here in the cafeteria. There will be breakfast, Bible teaching, fellowship, testimonies, and prayer.

I will be there. The elders will be there. The deacons will be there. Bible teachers and home group leaders will be there.

Men, will you be there. Wives, will your husbands be there?