

Mourning Dove Discipleship Counseling and Placement Services Newsletter

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Volume 1, Issue 2
November 2020

Choices . . .

What an honor to participate in the Lord's work! We are excited to share with you concerning the ministry of Mourning Dove Discipleship Counseling and Placement Services. Hopefully, you can discern by the tone of our communications that we always want to present the truth; the good and the bad, the successes and the failures, the happy endings and the sad endings. After all, the truth about this life is that there is a good and a bad ending, and we are going to end up in one place or the other for all eternity. The good news is that we have a **choice**. Which brings me to the topic of this update.

Life is about **choices**. Our tomorrow depends on the **choices** we make today. As I am reviewing the material that has been submitted for this newsletter, I see a common thread. I pray you will see it too. While each of the writers in this newsletter come from different backgrounds, most attend different churches, work in different fields, and interface with the world in different environments, we all share one thing – and it is the most important thing – our love for Jesus and our desire for discipleship. As we are pursuing life with Christ, He is teaching us and changing us. We are seeing more of Him and less of ourselves. But if we are honest, we still see way too much of ourselves. With that said, let me speak for myself, I see way too much of me and not enough of Jesus in my daily thoughts, deeds, and actions. However, as someone who is running the race for the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, I am seeing a maturing that can only be obtained by a daily **choice** to move toward God. In the **choice** to carry our cross daily, the buzzwords for our household & ministry this year have been these: vision, diligence, persistency, confidence (in God), consistency, willingness, and collaboration.

Pursuing the **vision** to grow, we pray and ask God to guide us in all decisions and for Him to prepare us for what lies ahead. With that said, Mourning Dove is relocating our office from Eastchester to the address listed above at Premier Center (one light from Penny Rd on Hwy 68). We are continuing to provide placement services to those struggling with addiction, weekly discipleship classes, individual counseling, and biblical life coaching. In addition, we are initiating a support group for grandparents who are raising their grandkids due to addiction, and for children who have been raised in traumatic environments due to addiction. **The meetings are beginning soon – call for details.**

We welcome the newest addition to our team as volunteer staff, April Sinclair. April has a wealth of experience in the addiction ministry and has a passion for helping people get into Christ-Centered recovery programs. We are delighted that the Lord has sent her our way!

Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated as we impart hope to the hopeless through Jesus Christ. Thank you for taking part!

Barbara Benfield
Director

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**THE LOVE OF GOD FOR HUMANITY.
How do you escape the corruption in your life?**

I Peter 1:23...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.

II Timothy 3:1-13...In the last day's **perilous times** will come and we are there now. **Perilous times according to II Tim. 2:14 "talks about people who are lovers of themselves, lovers of money, proud, disobedient to parents, unholy, brutal, traitors, headstrong and lovers of pleasure rather than God."** These perilous times we are in is like Noah's Day. God was so grieved in His heart over the people's corrupted lives that He sent a flood to destroy the people.

Corrupt Minds: according to I Peter 1:23 means unsound, perverted, wicked and evil. We can see corruption taking place over the nations which has swept through modern civilization. Such as the definition of marriage has been toppled; and our sexual identities, abortion, drug and alcohol addictions have flooded the world. We should never let corruption, which is a scheme from Satan cause us to lose focus on Christ. **Titus 2:14 Jesus gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.**

The "seed" of the incorruptible Word of God is different than any other seed on this earth!! The incorruptible seed that takes root in a corrupted life causes the sinful deeds of the flesh to die off! We then have the power of God on the inside of us to live a life free from the bondage of sin. **What a wonderful exchange God has offered to us to be born of His Spirit.** How do you escape the corruption of a wasted life? Glad you asked. Repent and ask Jesus to come into your heart and life right now. According to John 3:5 Jesus answered "most assuredly", I say to you, unless one is born of water (our physical birth) and the Spirit, (God's Spirit) he cannot enter the kingdom of God. I Peter 1:23 Now that you have invited Jesus in your life you have been born again--This new life you have now did not come from your earthly parents because the life they gave you will end in death. But this new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God. **This is the kind of love you are longing for.**

Because of God's GREAT LOVE FOR HUMANITY a Tsunami of His Spirit an "Awakening" is about to hit the USA. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful. He is not easily angered. He is filled with kindness and is eager not to punish you. He is going to have a new generation of people that will go forth with power and His anointing to take back what has been stolen from them. He is going to restore your life with a **fresh purpose to keep you from a wasted life and give you an eternal home in heaven forever.**

Doris Baker....10/22/2020

The fruit of the Spirit (the Holy Spirit) is a powerful spiritual force. Looking at individual essences of the fruit of the Spirit, we see that they are more than just nice character traits for Christians to have. They are our daily victory!

We are to be partakers of His Divine Nature!!

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”
(Galatians 5:22-23)

In the Spirit, these are all supernatural expressions of the character and presence of God who lives inside of us when we receive Jesus as Lord in the new birth.

The fruit of the Spirit becomes apparent when we surrender our will to the Holy Spirit.

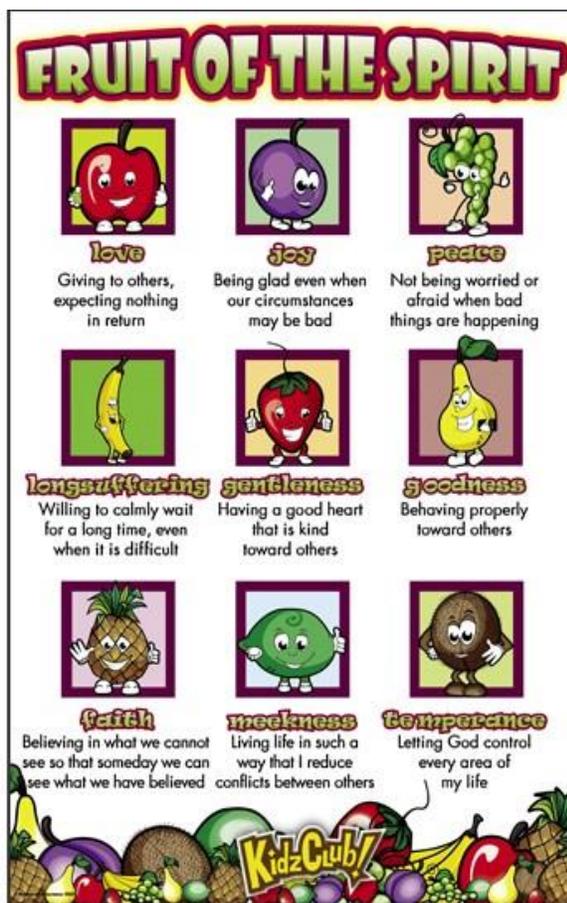
1. Each of these “fruits” provides us with an element of divine power that equips us to meet the challenges of life and come through in VICTORY!
2. They give us the power we need to rise above the snares of the devil and the pull of this world.
3. They help us fulfill our divine calling and keep us strong and stable enough to complete our God-appointed race on this earth.

There is not any situation, trial, or temptation that a child of God will face that the fruit of the Spirit can't enable him to OVERCOME.

How exactly do we go about walking consistently in the power of the fruit of the Spirit?

1. We want the love of God flowing in abundance because “**Love never fails.**” **1 Cor. 13:8**
2. We want plenty of Joy -

Fruit of the Spirit Chart –Nothing the devil comes up with can defeat you when you are walking in the fullness of the Fruit!!



because “**the Joy of the Lord is our strength.**” **Nehemiah 8:10** (Happiness is not a fruit. Happiness is temporary; joy comes from within & can only come from the Spirit)

3. We want the peace of God, “**Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusts in Him.**” **Isaiah 26:3**
4. We want faith and patience because they are the power twins that undergird us so when we are believing God for His promises, we are able to endure until God fulfills His promises. **Heb. 6:12**
5. We want gentleness, goodness, and kindness because they enhance our relationships, and empower us to manifest the character and life of God to those around us. **Phil 4:5** “**Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.**”
6. We want temperance, or self-control, because it comes to our aid and gives us victory in our conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil.

Everyone in the world wants to be loved -- even seemingly hardened sinners who haven't heard or believed the gospel -- are seeking joy and peace. But they are looking for it in the wrong places. The world can't provide these things.

**O God, Jehovah God,
You are the great I AM –
Your promises never fail –
With You there is no shadow of turning –
You are the God who was and is and always will be –**

In Exodus 6:2-4, God establishes Himself as the God of our fathers, the God of the covenant, the God who delivers.

In Exodus 34:5-7, Lord, Jehovah God, tells us of His character. He is a God who is:

- Merciful,
- Gracious,
- Slow to anger,
- Abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,
- Forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin,
- Who by no means clears the guilty,
- Who visits the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children to the 3rd and 4th generation (children are not punished for their parents' sin, but there is a natural progression of sin as it passes from one generation to another [MacArthur Study Bible])

A friend drew a chart and divided it into pieces (like a pie chart) and she had one piece of the pie marked, "spirituality." This friend is a Christian, but what she did not understand is that Jesus does not want a *piece* of the pie; a *piece* of your day; a *piece* of your time – He wants it all! I phoned my friend, whom I love dearly, and explained that her chart was all wrong. I explained that it needed to have Jesus at the center, and every other area of her life, each other piece of the pie, needs to flow from that Center. She said to me that she needs my help. To that, I had to hang up the phone and get on my face before the Lord, because it is only by the **mercy** of God that I can help anyone. It is by the mercy and **grace** of God that I am in any position to guide another human being through this life. It is only by **Christ in me** that I have anything worthwhile to offer.

When I committed my life to the Lord, His **steadfast love and faithfulness** became immediately real to me. I grappled with the fact that God is faithful because I had certainly not done anything to deserve His love and faithfulness. I had made a complete mess of my life, and no doubt would continue to struggle to walk out this new life as one who desires to honor Him. As I have been growing in Christ, and seeing Him more clearly, I realize that God's **forgiveness** is what remakes us. Our **repentance** brings about a changed heart as God cleanses and purifies us. We are truly being made new. I do not even recognize myself sometimes. The way I respond to my circumstances surprises me. The peace and hope that accompanies me throughout my day is not of myself. It is of God. It is of the God described above – full of mercy and grace, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, forgiving our iniquities, transgressions, and sins, who visits the iniquity of the fathers [and mothers] on the children. As God changes us, we are making the way for a **better future for our children** and future generations.

This same God is the One who cannot overlook sin (the guilty). A just God must respond to injustices. Jesus came to represent God's nature to us and give us a glimpse of God's character. We can look at Jesus and see our Father in Heaven. In *Bone of His Bone*, F.J. Huegel said, "The believer becomes a 'new creature,' the old life having been terminated by the Cross of Christ, an ever-deeper participation in which, results in an ever-fuller participation in the power of the Resurrection." In Christ, we can overcome the sin in our lives, outwardly and inwardly. Psalm 51:6 says, "You desire truth in the inward part." In the section titled, *Participants of the Cross*, Huegel said "Christ, and all true believers, are one. They constitute His body. They are, in the language of Adam, 'bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh.' May the Father of Lights enable us not only to understand, but to **enter into** this holy temple, and to realize our oneness with Christ. This is the only spring that can quench our thirst. There is no other way to the fulfillment of our deepest aspirations as Christians."

O, Jehovah God, whose greatness is throughout all eternity, make us one with Christ!

– Barbara Benfield, Executive Director

3 PURPOSES OF A DISCIPLE by Heath Benfield

Jesus gives His disciples and us three clear purposes that are still just as relevant today as they were then.

Mark 3:14-15 Then He (Jesus) appointed twelve (disciples), that *they might be with Him* and that *He might send them out to preach*, 15 and *to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons*.

1) The first purpose is that we would be with HIM.

Jesus revealed this in John 17:3 *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*, HE commanded it in Matthew 6:6, Moses prayed it in Exodus 33:13, Paul said it Philippians 3:10, and Mary practiced it in Luke 10:38-42.

Exodus 24:12 says, "Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."

WE MUST MAKE TIME TO BE WITH THE LORD AND GET TO KNOW HIM!!

2) The second purpose is that we might preach.

We do not have to stand behind a pulpit to preach. We all preach a sermon everyday with the way we live our lives in front of others! What kind of sermon am I preaching? Every Christian should be able to share Jesus with others. Jesus told us if we are ashamed of Him and His words, He will be ashamed of us (Luke 9:26). How will people know if we do not tell them (Romans 10:14-17)?

Paul gave young Timothy three great truths: We must Preach the Word (2 Timothy 4:1-5); We must Rightly Divide the Word (2 Timothy 2:14-16); We must give them the WHOLE TRUTH (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

People do not need to hear what we think, but rather what GOD is saying (Col. 2:8). People must also know they are lost before they can be found. They have to know the bad news, which is their inability to keep the Law, before they hear the Good News, which is CHRIST and that HE paid it all and in CHRIST ALONE is salvation! (Romans 3:23)

3) The third purpose is that we will have the power to heal the sick and cast out demons.

LET ME BE CLEAR HERE!! Jesus has given us authority over sickness and demons, but it is as HE wills. In Acts 19:11-20, the Jewish priest tried to cast out a demon and he had a bad day. In Mark 1:34-39, Jesus had cast out demons and healed many sick but the next day everyone was looking for HIM but Jesus said, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because *for this purpose I have come forth*." Jesus did not heal and cast out the demons of those waiting. In John 5, at the pool of Bethesda, there were a multitude of sick and lame people, but Jesus only healed the one man. We must be filled and led by the SPIRIT to heal and cast out demons and it must always be for GOD'S GLORY!

Luke 10:17-20 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

Mark 16:15-18 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

~WE ARE NOT TO FOLLOW SIGNS THEY ARE TO FOLLOW US!!!

James 5:13-16 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up...the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

LET US EXAMINE OURSELVES: AM I BEING WITH JESUS? WHAT KIND OF SERMON AM I PREACHING WITH THE LIFE I'M LIVING? AM I FOLLOWING SIGNS OR ARE SIGNS FOLLOWING ME?

Rich Beyond Measure – from Lisa Bodenheimer

Theologian A.W. Tozer taught us that, “We tend, by a secret law of the soul, move toward our mental image of God.” Tozer observed, “what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. It is essential for us to get a high, holy, clear, accurate picture of who God really is, because our perception of God has such a powerful effect on our lives.”

Chip Ingram in his book, *“Discover Your True Self”* stated, “What comes into our minds when we think about ourselves is the second most important thing about us.” In his book he states that, “many of our problems are coming from an inaccurate view of ourselves.”

I have to ask the question, “If we are, “In Christ” then why do we still act like the rest of the world?” Why do we struggle with shame and guilt when there is forgiveness of sins through the shed blood on the cross of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ?

In September, in the women’s discipleship class, we started a journey together. I asked that each of us start by listing words that best describe how we see ourselves. We realized that we were seeing ourselves through distorted mirrors. Feelings of **insecurity, inferiority, or superiority. A performance orientation** (my value is only in what I can do). **Withdrawal** (avoiding risks at all costs as it brings rejection) **Denial** (refusing to look honestly within as it’s too painful). **Compensation** (overachieving to prove everyone wrong). **Addictive behavior** (medicating the pain). **Unfulfilled longings for significance and acceptance.**

Our journey is an in-depth study in the book Ephesians chapters 1-3, and video study with Chip Ingram, *Discover Your True Self*.

In the book of Ephesians Paul addressed a group of believers who are **rich beyond measure** in Jesus Christ, yet living as “beggars” or “spiritual orphans,” and only because they are ignorant of their wealth. Each of us that are “**In Christ**” have a “heavenly bank account”; adoption, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom, inheritance, the seal of the Holy Spirit, life, grace, citizenship—in short every spiritual blessing. As believers in Jesus, unfortunately we still continue to draw from the bank of shame, guilt, rejection, unworthiness, insecurity, insignificance, fearfulness, and unable to receive love. Trust me, the return from this bank only takes us deeper into the pit of shame.

We are breaking free from deep-rooted misbeliefs about ourselves. By delving into the truth of God’s Word and allowing it to transform our thinking. Taking the lie we have been believing about ourselves and replacing it with the truth of God’s Word.

Do you have a treasure or something you value highly? Grandma’s wedding ring or pearls she always wore? You tuck these things away securely. Guard them and watch over them. To those who are “In Christ” He values us highly, watches over us, and secures us in His hands. How does that make you feel? It makes me feel warm and secure.

Self-talk about our guilt, shame and unworthiness, and every other debilitating condition we experience are futile in the face of the power at work within us. Do you have any idea of who you really are “In Christ Jesus”? The greatest power in the universe is available to us as part of our salvation.

Lisa Bodenheimer
Discipleship Leader

I began drinking socially at a young age. In 2006 when I went through a divorce my drinking accelerated. By the time 2011 rolled around, I was taking my drinks with me everywhere I went. My bottle was my best friend, my comfort, my security. In 2018, I had gotten to the point that the shakes were every morning so I would have to drink all day. I had lost a tremendous amount of weight and was having trouble walking without holding on to something.

In July 2018 I resolved to quit drinking and told myself that I'd quit at the end of the month, and then headed to the store and bought 10 boxes of wine to carry me through until the end of the month. I bought the ten boxes on Thursday and by the following Tuesday I had one-half box left. On Friday, my friend, Howdy, called and I confessed that I had a problem. He told me that I couldn't do this alone or I could have a heart attack or stroke. He told me to get some booze in me, so I called a cab and went and got another box of wine. The next day, I remember filling up my cup with water for the iron, and that is the last thing I remember. Howdy had tried to call during that time, and I didn't answer so he got worried. He reached out on facebook and got in contact with my aunt who showed up at my apartment on Monday. I had been in the floor for three days. They got me to the hospital. When I woke up in the hospital, a peace and warmth came over me. Ten days later I was at Solus Christus which is a Christ-Centered safe house. I discovered that it was Jesus who had met me in the hospital room and saved me from dying, and He used Howdy to get me there.

I had been active in church in my earlier years. I knew ABOUT Jesus, but what I discovered at Solus Christus was that while I knew ABOUT Jesus, I did not KNOW Him personally. I knew that I wanted to spend the rest of my life getting to know Jesus personally. Many changes have taken place in my life since that day. I have a different manner of living. I have a different perspective on making decisions. I sense that God is always with me, therefore, my decisions are influenced by His Presence. Knowing that Jesus is dwelling in me gives me a sense of confidence. Rather than my circumstances running my life, I am living life through Christ. I have a sense of purpose – Divine purpose. I have slowed down my decision-making and I pray now, before making every decision, big and small. That includes what I eat and what batches I take in my new job at Instacart.

Christ influences what I listen to on the radio and what I watch on TV. I am now more careful about everything I do, knowing that I am representing the Lord, whether alone or around others. I feel better about myself because I am not allowing indecent music and television into my life. I recognize that I am glorifying God in my decision-making and that gives me great joy. With all that He has saved me from, I want to please Him. His promises are true, and He will do all that He has promised as we walk with Him.

I am beginning to recognize the Holy Spirit speaking and guiding me. Jesus is teaching me to trust my instincts as they are being guided by Him. It is assuring to know He keeps me. I have begun to share my testimony with others, and I love talking about Jesus and sharing Jesus with others. I also enjoy praying with others. I look forward to leading the lost to Jesus for the rest of my life, and I look forward to seeing what He has in store for my life.

When others ask me what I'd like to say to those who are in a recovery program, to help them when they get out, this is what I'd say, "Cling to Jesus. Listen to godly counsel. Don't be hard-headed. Allow Him to guide your every step. Don't try to figure it all out. Stay in His word and keep allowing Him to change you. Be discipled and disciple others."

--Greta

**I am confident that I will see the LORD's goodness in the land of the living.
Wait on the Lord, be strong and of good courage, yes, wait patiently for Him.
Psalm 27:13-14**

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Counseling, Inc. 501c3 non-profit**

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A special thank you to our donors & volunteers. You are sowing seeds. May the Lord Bless you greatly.

Why Financially Support Mourning Dove Discipleship and Placement Services (A Christian-Based Program)

America is in the midst of an acute alcohol and drug addiction -- a pandemic!

Determined to find a way to help men & women, Mourning Dove Discipleship and Placement Services was founded and birthed in our hearts by the Spirit of God. God spoke to our hearts and said, **"If you build it, they will come"** -- **Like the movie, *Field of Dreams*, our nation, and the world, needs God to satisfy the hearts of those**

who can't find their "field of dreams," because their hearts have been clouded with pain, sorrow, drugs, alcohol and waste. With the guidance of God, we are building it and they are coming.

Thanks for helping someone!

