

LESSON NO. 15

DISCIPLESHIP WITH PASSION

DISCIPLESHIP
LESSONS FOR
YOUNG ADULTS

IDENTITY

 vangelism
mesoamerica


Mesoamerica

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IDENTITY

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Biblical Basis: John 1:12 and Acts 11: 25-26

Text to memorize: John 1:12

PURPOSE

That the new member assumes a 3-way identity in Christ, as a Christian, as part of society, and as a member of the church.

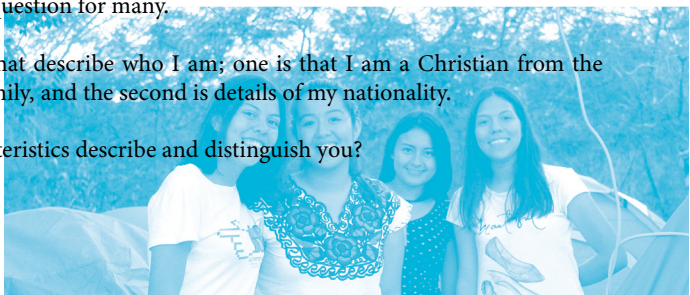
REAL LIFE STORY

When I was a little boy, they taught us a game called “Who are you? Where are you going? and what do you bring?” Of course, we answered the first question with our name. As I got older, I noticed that the question is actually deeper, when I played my answer to the question was actually the answer to another question; what is your name?

Who am I? It implies much more than my name and surnames, it has to do with my character, with my history, with the life goals that I have discovered, that God has for me, as well as with the family from which I come (family of origin), as well as the family that God has allowed me to form with my wife and daughters. Who I am? It has to do with my identity, that is the crucial question for many.

Two more characteristics that describe who I am; one is that I am a Christian from the Church of the Nazarene family, and the second is details of my nationality.

Who are you? What characteristics describe and distinguish you?



WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY?

Let's take a look at Paul's description of himself when he was not yet a Christian.

"Though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless". (Philippians 3:4-6).

This was his identity; Benjamite, Hebrew, circumcised, Pharisee, persecutor and blameless in relation to what the law of Moses demands. Some of the characteristics present us a somewhat clearer identity of Paul before meeting Jesus, he was a good Jew of nationality and religion. The book of Acts chapter 9 presents us his encounter with Jesus, his identity changes in such a way that when looking at the letters he wrote in the New Testament he presents himself as "apostle of Jesus Christ", which means "sent by Jesus Christ" or "servant of God", in the role of herald, spokesperson, who makes known the message that has been entrusted to him. Another way in which he presents himself is "servant of Jesus Christ", the word servant is also translated as "slave" (Romans 1:1).

Let's read a little more in Philippians: "But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ."

This new identity makes what previously defined him remain in the trash, he is a new Paul.

"Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."

- John 1:12



WHAT IS IT TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

Now let's start defining our identity. We are Christians, but what does it mean to be a Christian? The first time we find the term Christian is in Acts 11:25-26; "Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So, for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."

The passage makes it clear to us that those who were called Christians were the disciples of Jesus, those who had recognized His teachings and adhered to them by believing in His redemptive death and resurrection, now made up this community of faith called the church. In essence, we become Christians when we sincerely trust that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, allowing Him, through the Bible and His Holy Spirit, to lead every area of our lives.

WHAT IS IT TO BE A NAZARENE

The Christian church is made up of all the people who have recognized Jesus as Lord and Savior and seek to please Him, but we are organized by families with different biblical-theological emphases.

Our family is called "Arminian-Wesleyan", since 2 of the characters in the history of the Church have left us a legacy of teachings for daily life. The first, Jacob Arminio, was a Dutch theologian and professor who in the post-reformation tried to make biblical exegesis the method for theology, rather than logic. He was part of the movement called "Calvinism", since he had been a student of Teodoro de Beza, John Calvino's successor, but he distanced himself from certain affirmations while still recognizing that the center of his faith was Jesus Christ.

The second is John Wesley, a theologian and Pastor of the Church in England, his father was a minister, then Wesley himself would also become a minister, developing the theology of Christian perfection or "entire sanctification." When being rejected by the Anglican Church he became the initiator of a movement that later would conform the Methodist Church, he also, in an indirect way, gave form to the so-called Wesleyan churches.

The Church of the Nazarene is started by Phineas F. Bresee, later it becomes a great movement in the union of the churches. The Church of the Nazarene understood the need to preach the gospel for the holiness in the lives of Christians.

Today the church is in more than 164 areas around the world. We could point out other characteristics of the church; how is its government or its doctrine, but we will settle for pointing out what we have called "Core Values of the Church of the Nazarene"; we are a Christian people, we are a missional people, and we are a people of holiness.

BIBLICAL SUPPORT



"Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12).

According to John 1:12, who are given the power to call themselves children of God?

“For He himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in His flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which He put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of His household”. (Ephesians 2:14-19).

According to Ephesians 2:14-19, what did Jesus do through the cross?





REFLECTION

Read the following passages and write what God expects of us.

Ephesians 2:14-19 shows us that in Jesus we are all a _____, making you and me a new _____, so we are _____ of the saints and _____ of God.

Psalms 122:6-9. The psalmist asked the Jews to _____ by the _____ of _____. So, we too must ask for our _____

Jeremiah 29:7-10. The prophet exhorts the Jews to ask for _____

I want to encourage you to get to know more our church, the Church of the Nazarene. For this I recommend that you consult the church manual, talk with your Pastor or leader, and look for more resources such as the essential Nazarenes.

Research and write what the 16 articles of faith are:

These must be studied step by step using your Bible and, in a group, to help clarify doubts, pray, and make questions.

Research and write what are the 3 levels of government of the Church of the Nazarene according to the manual:

PRACTICE

Play the game of Who are you? Where are you going? And what do you bring? Share your answer with someone else if you can.

According to John 1:12, Jeremiah 29:7-10, Ephesians 2:18-19, and Philippians 3:20-21, what would your answers be?
