



The  
**FLOW**  
Adult CURRICULUM

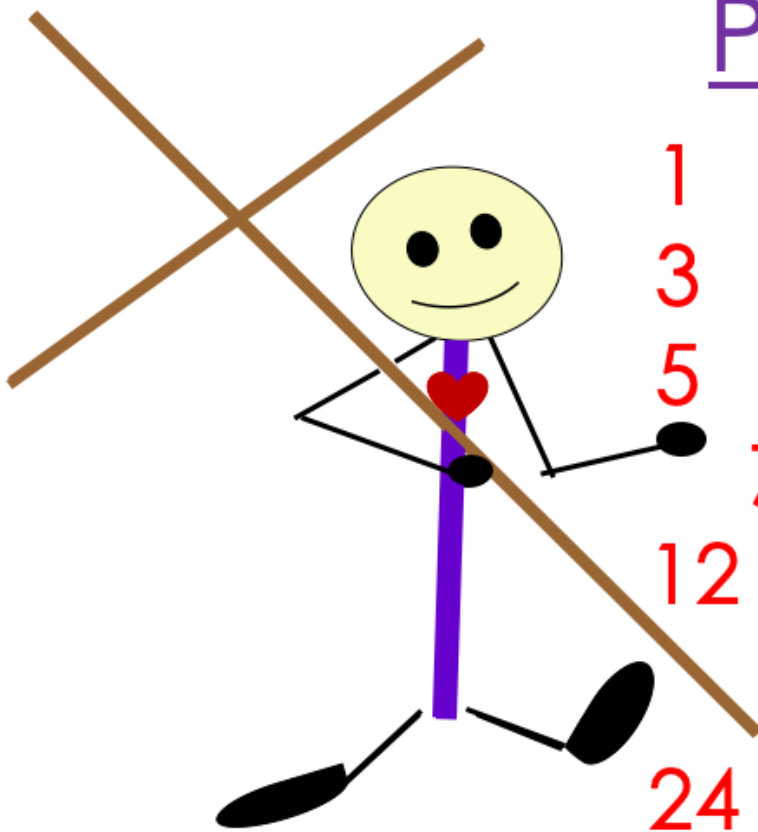
#9

LIFER

Hebrews 13:17-18

(Come And See Christianity book pages 32-33)

# The FLOW

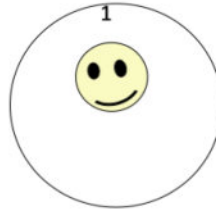


## PREVIEW:

- 1 Design
- 3 Divisions
- 5 Disciples
- 7 Details
- 12 Disciplines
- 24 Distinctives

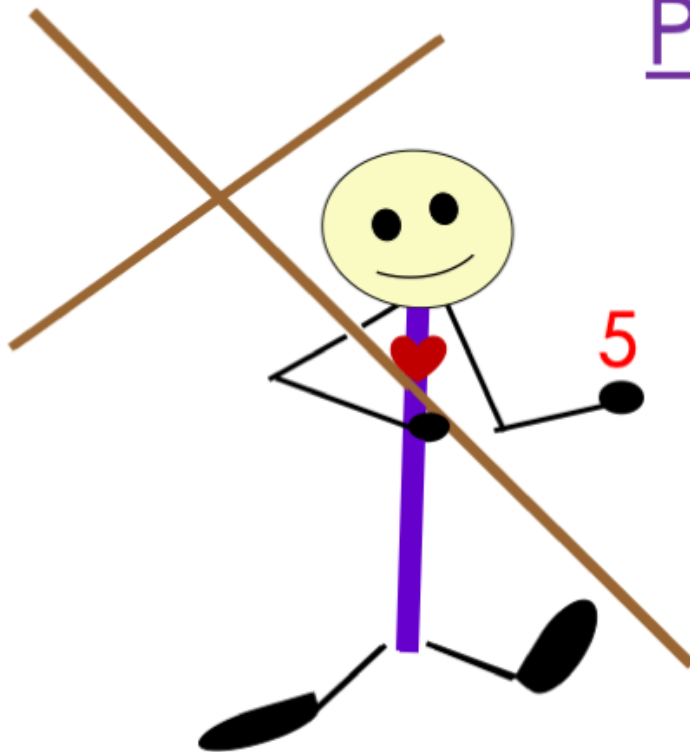
SECTION THREE: 5 Disciples

The  
HEAD

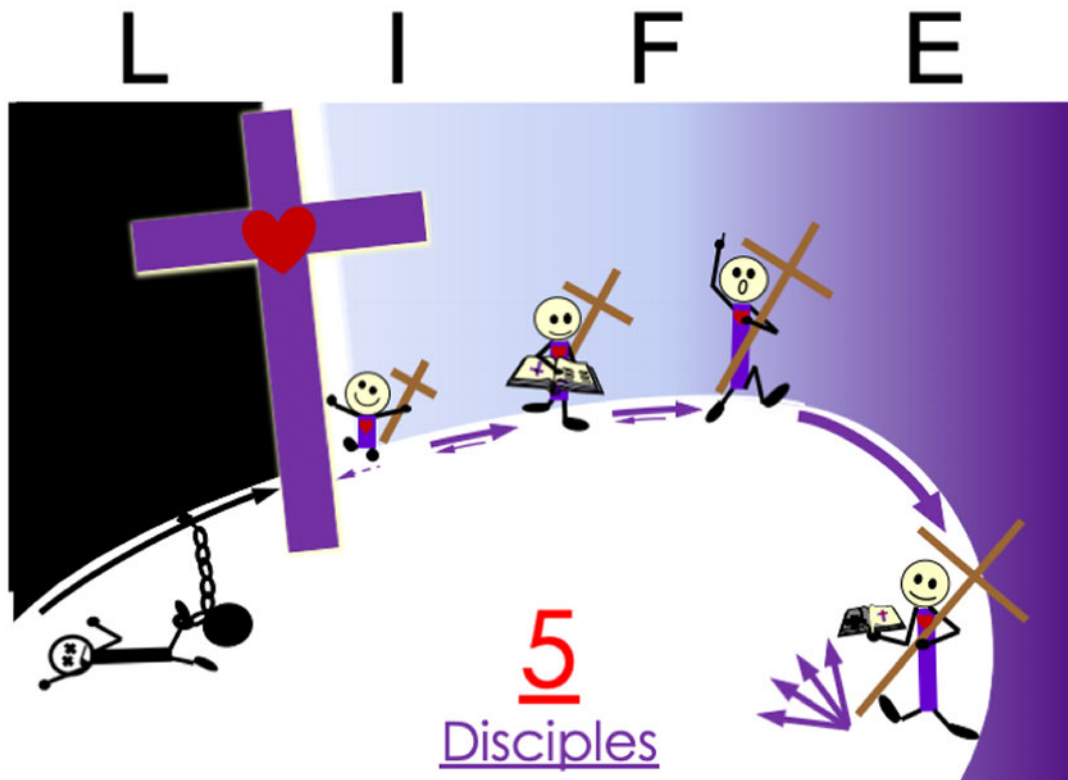


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PREVIEW:

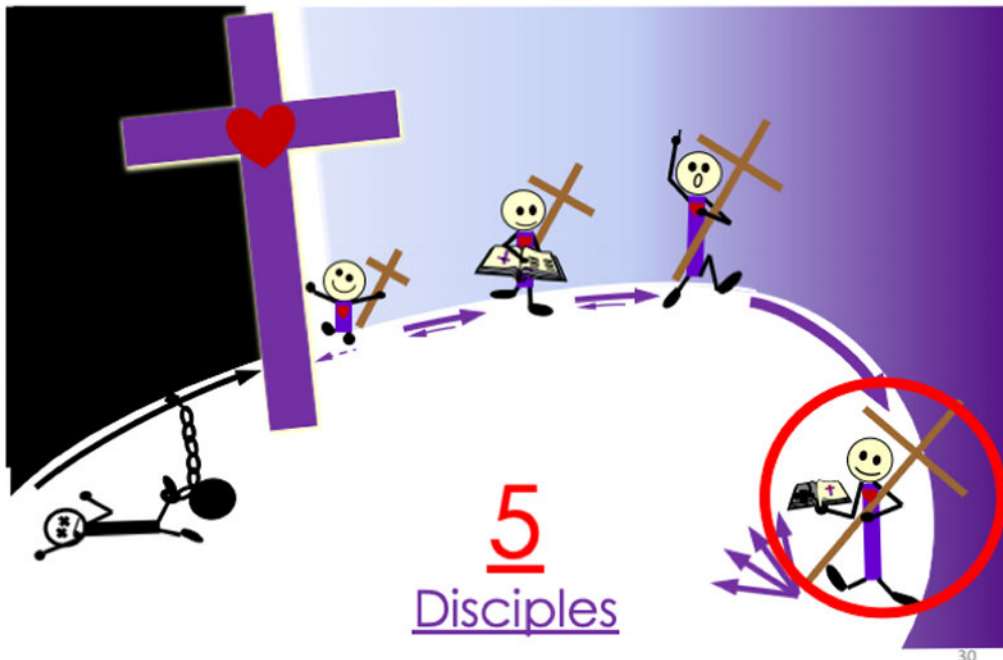


5 Disciples



**5 DISCIPLES:** The world is made up of 5 different types of people (a.k.a. “disciples”). Spiritually speaking, everyone fits somewhere in this biblical & progressive blueprint... Are you amongst the Lost, Lovers, Learners, Leaders, or Lifers?

L I F E



## The LIFER

An **imperfect** but **passionate, all-in, biblically-mature, fully devoted follower** of the Lord Jesus Christ... **Lifers** are missionally & exponentially, fruit-producing, **servant-leaders**. **Lifers** are a God-given gift to the Church. **Lifers** are **spiritual under-shepherds** with **God-given authority & responsibilities**; they are **equippers who make disciples who make disciples who make disciples**.

## 2 Timothy 3:16-17

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

### INTRO:

Welcome back to Section Three, where we are about to conclude our focus on the “5 Disciples.” Herein, we have shown where and how Christianity gives an account of EVERY human being... past, present, and future. In other words, Christianity has a valid designation and description for every person, everywhere, throughout all human history. No exceptions. Zero! Moreover, our “Framework” diagram (also known as the “LIFE Cycle” in earlier training materials) offers a user-friendly, visual, and comprehensive tool that aids in the spiritually-defining and missional-placement of each individual on earth. EVERY single person. Bar none.

Having said that, being able to define and describe all of humanity is both valuable and validating for any professing worldview. In the case of Christianity, our worldview is unique, in part, to the extent that we recognize the reality and relationship that exists between the 5 types of disciples who make up the world’s population.

At the risk of overstating the obvious, take note, without a cohesive comprehension of how the people of the world relate to one another, at the core of their humanness, it would be hard to advance, with any viable seriousness, a credible worldview. Fortunately, the God of the Bible has been more than forthright when it comes to engaging and explaining the human condition from birth to burial, from the Garden of Eden to each soul’s eternal destination.

Finally, before we begin, just to be clear, let us briefly review Section One (“1 DESIGN”), Section Two (“3 DIVISIONS” – HEAD, HEART, and HANDS), and how they have begun the “FLOW,” which has cascaded down to Section Three and the “5 DISCIPLES.”

Seeing the holistic connection between Come And See Christianity’s FLOW sections is critical for one’s long-term understanding of the definitions and dynamics that make up a biblical worldview AND Christian discipleship. Stated differently, God’s one divine design calls for the sharing of THE Gospel, per God’s Word, will, and ways (also known as a biblical worldview). At the same time, the missional “design” of Almighty God calls for the miraculous transformation of each person’s three core “divisions” – their HEAD, HEART, and HANDS. Now we are ready to finish our focus on the 5 Disciples.

## PRAYER:

LORD, we seek to bless You with all that is within us. Help us here, we pray, to be that blessing as we come to better understand You and Your eternal truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Help us to see with Your eyes and love with Your love, all that You would reveal to us through Your Word, Your will, and Your ways. May we grow in our grasp of Your realities, Your means of restoration, and Your mission of reproduction. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen and Amen

## CONTEXT:

### Macro

In our previous lesson, we looked at the fourth type of the world's five disciples... the LEADER. In that study, we realized that God's design includes the empowering of sanctified, stable, mature, fruit-producing believers.

As we begin to focus on the LIFER, it is important to note that everything which defines and describes the LOVER, LEARNER, and LEADER remains in the LIFER. To that end, developing into greater Christlikeness is the key difference and dynamic at all transitional stages. Consider, in the same way that a baby changes and grows into a teenager, so it is with the baby LOVER who grows into a spiritual adolescent (also known as the LEARNER). Similarly, LEADERS are born when LEARNERS "graduate" and move into their higher privileges and responsibilities. The same principle of spiritual growth applies when contrasting the LEADER and LIFER. To say it differently, while LEADERS are empowered to lead in God's family, LIFERS lead the LEADERS and exemplify Christlikeness to the LOST, LOVER, LEARNER, LEADERS, and other LIFERS. Notice that the growth process, in both the physical AND spiritual examples, can be quite dramatic and very noticeable, while never altering the person's DNA.

Next, it is absolutely essential that the Holy Bible, God's inspired and inerrant (without error) Scriptures, be used, in full context, to define and describe ALL aspects and dynamics that prove to be relevant to our topic. In short, God's Word is both the Almighty's absolute AND authoritative truth. In our study and in our lives, if God said it, that settles it!

Finally... it is important to recognize that any thorough attempt to explain what Christianity means by "saved" must, at the very least, expand upon and explain some foundational, biblical, spiritual, personal, and eternal relationships. All of these and more have a part to play when it comes to understanding the cause, affect, grace, and blessings of the LIFER.

NOTE:

When we speak of the four (4) “saved” types of disciples (LOVER, LEARNER, LEADER, & LIFER) in a collective, historical, and global sense; together (in contrast to the LOST), they make up the biblical Christian Church (capital “C” intended). Herein, you will find true and authentic (while still sinful and imperfect) Christianity.

Micro

While the Bible speaks of the capital “C” Church in an “all-Christians” everywhere context, make no mistake, the global-macro family portrait of Christianity is nothing more than a culmination of all the micro, individual, and personal Christians being pooled together as the Church. In other words, biblically speaking, being a LIFER (also known as a spiritually-mature, fully-devoted, divinely-appointed and authority-given Christian) is a very personal and, by God’s grace, eternal condition (meaning one cannot lose their salvation). Amen! Consequently, Christ’s best ambassadors personally Engage, Explain, Equip, Empower, and Exemplify Christlikeness while discipling others.

At this point, we would be well served to revisit our “Framework” diagram, which divides all of humanity into 5 specific types of DISCIPLES: the LOST, the LOVER, the LEARNER, the LEADER, and the LIFER. Remember, from our introduction to Section Three, every human being belongs, at any given point in their lives, in ONE of these five DISCIPLE groups. Moreover, each person’s positioning is based on their current spiritual relationship to Creator Christ and all that His cross represents.

To be clear... in saying (above) that, “each person’s positioning is based on their current, spiritual relationship to Creator Christ and all that His cross represents,” there are three biblical truths that should be undergirded.

1. “Current” implies that changes can occur... because they can and they should. In short, God’s divine design calls for spiritual growth.
2. Having said that, note also that the spiritual path between the LOST and LOVER only goes one way. The good news is that the “current” LOST can become, by God’s grace, a future “LOVER” (Ephesians 2:1-10). The even better news is that **it is impossible for a born-again LOVER to lose their salvation and go back to being LOST** (cf. John 5:24) – Amen!
3. Finally, the word “current” underscores that we are highlighting and explaining the broad, 5 step, potentially dynamic process of spiritual growth that Christianity reveals. Moreover, in the same way that one can review a physical life from pre-birth, to infancy, to adolescence, to adulthood, to senior citizenship, so it is spiritually when we describe the LOST, the LOVER, the LEARNER, the LEADER, and the LIFER.



## Message

This lesson needs to begin with a careful distinction... While our primary focus will concentrate on “positional” LIFERS (also known as Elders) in the context of the Christian church, that is not to say that every LIFER has to be or become a pastor, elder, bishop, or official overseer. No. Some of God’s most mature, devoted, and Christlike believers serve King Jesus and His kingdom without title, office, or official recognition. Moreover, while the Bible does not allow women to serve as elders, pastors, bishops, overseers, or lead preachers and teachers in the Church (cf. 1 Timothy 2:12 & 3:2) that is not to say that God does not have female LIFERS in His family.

What unites and defines every LIFER is their distinctive devotion to Christ and their time-tested, biblical-maturity, coupled with a supernaturally blessed, Christlike witness... With that said, the Lord has long used countless women (ie. Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong) and courageous laymen (Hebrews 11:37-38) to serve as inspirational LIFERS all over the world. Amen! Finally, while many, if not the majority, of LIFERS are likely to BE in missional leadership positions, again, know that **true LIFERS need no titles.**

**BIG IDEA: LIFERS are the most biblically mature, IMPERFECT, fully devoted and Christlike, SERVANT LEADERS in the family of God.**

PREVIEW:

1. LIFER’s are Anointed
2. LIFER’s are Appointed
3. LIFER’s are Authoritative
4. LIFER’s are Attacked

TEXT:

[Hebrews 13:17-18a](#)

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.*

*Pray for us...*

# 1. LIFER's Are ANOINTED

Illustration:

As with the previous Christian disciples (LOVER, LEARNER, and LEADER), the LIFER's description begins with a validation of their salvation (2 Corinthians 13:5). In short, the LIFER's anointing is their Christian starting point (see below).

*The Bible contains a literal reference to a prophet's anointing when the Lord commanded [Elijah](#) to anoint [Elisha](#) as the prophet to succeed him ([1 Kings 19:16](#)). It also includes metaphorical references to anointing to indicate that prophets were empowered and protected by the Spirit of the Lord to perform their calling ([1 Chronicles 16:22](#); [Psalm 105:15](#))...*

*In the New Testament, Jesus Christ reveals Himself as our anointed King, Priest, and Prophet. He is God's Holy and chosen Son, the [Messiah](#). In fact, Messiah, which literally means "anointed one," is derived from the Hebrew word for "anointed." Christ (Gr. Christos) means "the anointed one."*

*Jesus declared at the launch of His ministry, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor . . . to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free" ([Luke 4:18](#); cf. [Isaiah 61:1](#)). Jesus Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecy as the Anointed One, the chosen Messiah ([Luke 4:21](#)). He proved His anointing through the miracles He performed and the life He sacrificed as Savior of the world ([Acts 10:38](#)).*

*There is also a sense in which Christians today are anointed. Through Jesus Christ, believers receive "an anointing from the Holy One" ([1 John 2:20](#)). This anointing is not expressed in an outward ceremony but through sharing in the gift of the Holy Spirit ([Romans 8:11](#)). At the moment of salvation, believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and joined to Christ, the Anointed One. As a result, we partake of His anointing ([2 Corinthians 1:21-22](#)). - GotQuestions.org*

Explanation:

[1 John 2:27](#)

*As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.*

See the Lord's loving appointments in the passages above and below... It is Almighty God and His divine design that has designated and ANOINTED some of His disciples to BE LIFERS. Here again, we come face to face with sovereign grace, in part, through our Creator's nurturing nature and loving kindness. Note that He has given His family, the Christian Church, on a micro level, all that is needed for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). At the same time, through the gift of His LIFERS, the Lord has given The Church, on a macro level, a diverse category and caliber of leaders, "to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry."

Ephesians 4:11-15

*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, **12**for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; **13**until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. **14**As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; **15**but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, **16**from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

Application:

LIFERS know, grow, and go in the blessing of their ANOINTING.

1 Timothy 4:14

*Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.*

*Jesus does not give recipes that show the way to God as other teachers of religion do. He is Himself the way.*

*- Karl Bart*

## 2. LIFERS's Are APPOINTED

Illustration:

Acts 14:23

*And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*

Explanation:

The appointing of LIFERS begins with the anointing of God's leaders (see Ephesians 4:11-16 above). Here again, we need to see and understand an important distinction...

When we think about a LIFER being "APPOINTED," there are two (2) "levels" of biblical and missional appointments. First, there are God's perfect and divine appointments (Acts 9:15 – *"But the Lord said to him (Ananias), 'Go, for he (Paul) is a chosen instrument of Mine to carry My name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel'"*). Then, by contrast, there are the imperfect appointments made by men. Note, some human appointments are implemented by, and/or with, spiritual wolves and goats (cf. Matthew 7:15 & Acts 20:29). In such cases, there are more than imperfections being appointed, these are cancers being spread throughout the body of Christ.

Still, there are other human appointments that are done in God honoring ways, according to God's Word, by well-intended and prayerfully committed men and women of God... that also, at times, turn out tragically. The Apostle Paul's experience with Demas (2 Timothy 4:10 – *"For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone..."*) is a classic example.

Take heart Christian, all is not lost in the human realm. There are still other LIFER APPOINTMENTS that are made in the Church and broader Christendom that have God's richest blessing on them, from start to finish. When God's Word, will, and ways are married to the Messiah's miraculously transformed missionaries and their faithful obedience in answering His call on their lives, breathtaking displays of the Lord at work multiply exponentially.

Acts 20:28

*"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

Application:

*We must make the invisible kingdom visible in our midst.  
- John Calvin*

2 Timothy 2:2

*The things which you (Timothy) have heard from me (Paul)  
in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to  
faithful men who will be able  
to teach others also.*

### 3. LIFER's Are AUTHORITATIVE

Illustration:

Titus 1:5

*For this reason I (Paul) left you (Titus) in Crete, that you  
would set in order what remains and appoint elders  
in every city as I directed you,*

Explanation:

Hebrews 13:17

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over  
your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with  
joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.*

LIFERS are God's anointed, appointed, and authority-given leaders in the Church. Those with "formal" appointments (i.e. Elder) and "positional" AUTHORITY (i.e. Pastor) are to be obeyed and submitted to as they obey and uphold God's Word, will, and ways. Loving leaders that exemplify a Christlike combination of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-11) & a life lived in the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20) should inspire faithful obedience. Similarly, those LIFERS who do not have positional AUTHORITY, yet serve informally as personal disciple-makers, should be recognized and respected for their influential roles in kingdom service. **Obeying righteous Christian LIFERS is obeying Christ The LORD.**

All LIFERS will give an account for BOTH, the disciples they were serving and seeking to help, as well as their own applications of the appointments and authority God gave them... See the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) for a deeper understanding of this leadership dynamic.

1 Timothy 5:17

*Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.*

Application:

1 Peter 5:1-4

*So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed, **2**shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; **3**not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. **4**And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

#### 4. LIFER's Are ATTACKED

Illustration:

Anyone who has ever studied war or considered the strategies and tactics of sizable battlefields knows that leadership is one of the most important aspects of any fight. In short, if and when one is able to take out their enemy's leader(s), more times than not, unless there is an apt and ready replacement quickly installed, the tide tends to turn quickly and the leaderless side is soon defeated.

The same principle applies, and is exemplified, in spiritual warfare! For this very reason, relentless ATTACKS are creatively launched against LIFERS – those who are actively and missionally leading God’s LOVERS, LEARNERS, LEADERS, and other LIFERS.

**The more passion in the LIFER, the more power in the ATTACKS.**

Explanation:

God’s Word is FULL of warnings and examples of intense spiritual warfare. Even Jesus was targeted throughout His earthly ministry. Think about it... Satan actually tried to personally tempt Christ by twisting and quoting the Bible (Matthew 4:1-11).

Whether it is 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8’s chilling truth, that the Devil is our enemy who “...is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for souls to devour,” or 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:14-15’s biblical declaration that Satan and his minions will “come down disguised as angels of light,” one thing is clear, there is a war underway and the stakes could not be higher.

The Hebrews 13:18a (“Pray for us.”) request for prayer, coupled with Paul’s plea in the Philippian passage below, are both born out of a LIFER’s battle scars and keen awareness of the fight at hand. Moreover, there is a beautiful selflessness hidden in their prayer requests... While it may seem as though their hopes are grounded in self-preservation, the reality is, the heart of these LIFERS, as is the case with all true LIFERS, seek first and foremost to bring glory to God and protection to His people (Romans 9:3).

Philippians 1:15-19

*It’s true that some are preaching out of jealousy and rivalry. But others preach about Christ with pure motives. **16**They preach because they love me, for they know I have been appointed to defend the Good News. **17**Those others do not have pure motives as they preach about Christ. They preach with selfish ambition, not sincerely, intending to make my chains more painful to me. **18**But that doesn’t matter. Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice. **19**For I know that as you pray for me and the Spirit of Jesus Christ helps me, this will lead to my deliverance.*

Application:

**LOVERS, LEARNERS, & LEADERS... pray for your LIFERS!**

Hebrews 13:18a

*"Pray for us!"*

LIFERS... be on guard!

Acts 20:28

*"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

REVIEW:

**LIFERS are the most biblically mature, IMPERFECT, fully devoted and Christlike, SERVANT LEADERS in the family of God.**

CLOSE:

*We are the Bibles the world is reading...*

*- Billy Graham*

*Our walk counts far more than our talk, always!*

*- George Mueller*

*We are told to let our light shine, and if it does, we won't need to tell anybody it does. Lighthouses don't fire cannons to call attention to their shining - they just shine.*

*- Dwight L. Moody*



## For What?

Acts 15:22

*Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers,*

*Christlike obedience and biblical submitting are BOTH gospel fruit AND the validating heartbeats of Christian blessing, and true, counter cultural sanctification.*

*Nothing strengthens, unites, & unifies a family more than God's Spirit... thru God's truth, love, mission, passion, and PRAYER*

## So What?

*Remain side by side with Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, and you too will become a permanent magnet, a permanently attractive force; and like Him you will draw all men unto you, like Him you will be drawn unto all men. That is the inevitable effect of Love. Any man who fulfills that cause must have that effect produced in him.*

*- Henry Drummond*

*If I have seen further than others,  
it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.*

*- Isaac Newton*

*A man's life is always more forcible than his speech. When men take stock of him they reckon his deeds as dollars and his words as pennies. If his life and doctrine disagree the mass of onlookers accept his practice and reject his preaching.*

*- Charles Spurgeon*

*He that gives good advice, builds with one hand; he that gives good counsel and example, builds with both; but he that gives good admonition and bad example, builds with one hand and pulls down with the other.*

*- Francis Bacon*

### **Now What?**

*God is preparing His heroes. And when the opportunity comes, He can fit them into their places in a moment. And the world will wonder where they came from.*

*- A. B. Simpson*

Titus 2:15

*Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority.  
Let no one disregard you.*

Hebrews 13:7

*Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God.  
Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.*

1 Thessalonians 5:12

*We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you  
and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,*

Proverbs 29:18

*Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint,  
but blessed is he who keeps the law.*

*The lives of ministers oftentimes convince more strongly  
than their words; their tongues may persuade,  
but their lives command.*

*- Thomas Brooks*

## PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, thank You so much for the Truth and Love of Your Word, will, and ways. Please help us to absorb and apply ALL that You have shared and commanded in the Bible. May our heads be infilled with Your defining Scriptures, for the express purpose of informing, inspecting, and inspiring our sanctified hearts and serving hands.  
In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen and Amen

## Related SERMONS:

*"Did You Heed That?" (A)*

*"Pray For Us" (B)*

Hebrews 13:17-18a

September 29, 2019 & October 6, 2019

Sermon Series: Hold On!