

# BUILD II

**B**IBLICAL

**U**NDERSTANDING

**I**NTERCESSORY PRAYER

**L**EADERSHIP

**D**EVELOPMENT

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. Colossians 2:6-7*

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## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for participating in BUILD Level Two. The focus of BUILD II is on discipleship—becoming a more committed and faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.

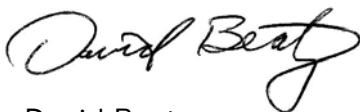
I think you will find the teachings in BUILD II to be more challenging than those in BUILD I. For this reason, it will be important to read the week's material before meeting with your group.

As in BUILD I, a significant commitment to developing your devotional life is required in BUILD II. This commitment includes:

- Reading the Bible daily (approximately 15 minutes or a minimum of one chapter) during the twelve-week BUILD semester. You will also be asked to memorize several verses of Scripture during the semester.
- Spending at least 10 minutes daily in prayer. You also agree to pray daily for the other members of your BUILD team.
- Agreeing to honor God by the way you live.
- Meeting with your BUILD team weekly during the semester.

I pray that you will find your spiritual life greatly enriched by participating in BUILD II. And I pray you will come to know God better and love Him more. Thank you for being part of this exciting ministry of our church.

In Christ,



David Beaty  
Pastor, River Oaks Community Church

## MY COMMITMENT AS A PARTICIPANT IN THE BUILD II MINISTRY

With God's help, I commit to:

- Meet weekly with my BUILD II team for 12 weeks.
- Read the Bible for a minimum of 15 minutes each day during the twelve-week period. I will memorize the assigned verses and review them during the semester.
- Spend a minimum of 10 minutes each day in prayer during the BUILD-II semester. I agree to pray daily for the spiritual development of the other members of my BUILD II team.
- Seek to live in such a way as to honor Jesus Christ and represent Him well before others.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## UNIT 1 WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

The New Testament word for “disciple” means “a learner.” The word is used of the disciples of John the Baptist (Matt. 9:14), of the Pharisees (Matt 22:16), and of those who followed the teachings of Moses (John 9:28). Jesus spoke of His own followers as His disciples (John 8:31). Much of His teaching was directed to His disciples. And it was to them that He left the commission to take the Gospel to the entire world, making disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19).

From Jesus’ teaching, we see several key truths about what it means to be one of His disciples. These include:

- A disciple studies and obeys the teachings of his master (or teacher). (John 8:31-32)
- A disciple follows the example of his master. (John 13:12-16)
- A disciple prays like his master. (Luke 11:1-4)
- A disciple bears fruit for his master. (John 15:8)
- A disciple is willing to give up everything to follow his master. (Luke 14:33)

Read John 15:1-17.

What do you think Jesus meant when He said his disciples were “clean” because of the word He had spoken to them?

How does Jesus say we can bear fruit? (v. 4)

What do you think it means for us to “remain” in Him? (v. 4)

How much spiritual fruit can we produce in our own strength? (v. 5)

What do you think Jesus meant by the two conditions He gave for answered prayer?  
(v. 7)

How do we prove our love for Jesus? (v. 14)

What particular command stands out as of special importance in remaining, or abiding,  
in Christ? (vv. 9-17)

What is clearly God's purpose for your life, based upon verse 16?

*Pray for the other members of your BUILD team to be disciples who "bear much fruit."*

Memorize John 15:5.

## UNIT 2 THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Jesus did not make the road of discipleship look easy. He challenged his followers to a life of complete allegiance and self-sacrifice. He promised them that they would suffer and be persecuted for His sake.

Read Matthew 10:37-42.

Who must be first in our devotion if we are to be “worthy” of Jesus? (v. 37)

What do you think it means to take up your “cross” and follow Him? (v. 38)

What do you think it means to “lose” your life for His sake? (v. 39)

What do verses 40 - 42 indicate about the reward that God has in store for the devoted disciple?

Read Luke 14: 25-35.

When Jesus said we must “hate” our family members and our own lives, He was using a figure of speech intended to show that our love for Him should be so great that our love for family is as “hatred” by comparison. God does not intend for us to hate our families or anyone else! But our devotion to Him must always be first.

Why do you think Jesus put so much emphasis in this passage on counting the cost of discipleship? (vv. 28-32)

What do you think it means for us to “give up everything” to be His disciple? (v. 33)

The challenging passage we have read today makes it clear that Christian discipleship is a serious thing. Take some time to pray for one another to be empowered to live lives of complete devotion to Jesus Christ.

Memorize Luke 14:33.



### UNIT 3 THE DISCIPLE AND SCRIPTURE

Throughout the Bible, those people whom God worked through and blessed were those who heard and obeyed His words.

- In the Old Testament books of Exodus and Leviticus, there are dozens of times we find the words, “The Lord said to Moses.”
- Joshua was told to meditate on God’s Law day and night so he could obey it. (Joshua 1:8)
- When God spoke to the boy Samuel, he replied, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” (1 Samuel 3:10)
- Job said, “I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.” (Job 23:12)
- The writer of the first Psalm speaks of the blessedness of the one who delights in the law of the Lord. (Psalm 1:2)
- All of the prophets heard and communicated God’s Words, often at great personal sacrifice.
- Jesus lived in perfect fulfillment of the Scriptures. He also said, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.” (John 14:23)
- The early Christians went about preaching the good news of Jesus (the Gospel), which was said to be “the word of God.” (Acts 8:12-14)

God has chosen to reveal Himself to us through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We learn about God—His nature, His character, His will, and His plans—through His Word. The most fundamental spiritual discipline of a disciple of Jesus Christ should be the study of God’s Word, the Bible.

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17, James 1:22-25, and 2 Peter 1:16-21.

Based on 2 Timothy 3:16, what is the origin of all Scripture?

How would you respond to someone who said, “The Bible was made up by men to further their own purposes”? (2 Peter 1:21)

For what purpose has God given us the Scriptures? (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

What should be our commitment when we “listen to” (by reading or hearing) God’s Word? (James 1:22)

What happens when we read the Bible without the willingness to obey it? (James 1:22-24)

What is the promise for the person who hears and practices God’s Word? (James 1:25)

Pray with your BUILD team members to each have a growing love for the study of God’s Word, the Bible.

Memorize 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

## UNIT 4 THE DISCIPLINES OF MEMORIZATION AND MEDITATION

One of the most helpful disciplines in the spiritual growth of a disciple of Jesus Christ is the memorization of Scripture. A brief look at the life of Jesus in the Gospels reveals that He quoted Scripture:

- when tempted by Satan. (Matthew 4:4, 7 and 10)
- when speaking to the crowds. (Matthew 11:10)
- when teaching His disciples. (Matthew 13:13-15)
- when explaining who He was. (Matthew 22:42-45)
- when predicting that Peter would deny Him. (Matthew 26:31)

Jesus' example shows us how valuable it is to be able to quote Scripture at a time of need or when ministering to others. This will be possible for us as we develop the spiritual discipline of memorizing Scripture.

A discipline that goes hand-in-hand with that of memorizing Scripture is meditation upon Scripture. If we liken the hearing of God's Word to eating food (as the Bible does in several places such as Jeremiah 15:16 and 1 Peter 2:2), memorization could be considered "storing" and meditation could be thought of as "digesting."

What is biblical meditation?

- Meditation is pondering the words of Scripture with a receptive, expectant heart, allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to us through those words.

Read Joshua 1:6-9, Psalm 1 and Psalm 119:97-104.

Joshua was the young leader called by God to lead the Israelites after the death of Moses. What, specifically, did God command Joshua to do? (Joshua 1:6-9)

Why was Joshua told to meditate upon the Law day and night? (v. 8)

What did God say would happen if he did? (v. 8)

What distinguishes the godly person described in Psalm 1:1-3?

How is the godly person's "delight" expressed, and how is it rewarded? (Ps 1:2-3)

Look at Psalm 119:97-104.

What benefits come to the one who meditates upon God's commands?

The memorization and meditation of Scripture offers valuable benefits to a disciple of Jesus Christ. These include:

- the renewing of our minds. (enabling us to better fulfill Romans 12:1-2 and Philippians 4:8)
- increasing our understanding of God's truth.
- enabling us to better obey God's instruction.

Share with your BUILD team how you think you could benefit by regularly memorizing and meditating upon Scripture. Pray for one another to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit for this discipline.

Memorize Joshua 1:8.

## UNIT 5 THE DISCIPLE AND PRAYER

Jesus Christ was a man of prayer. Of all the disciplines that Jesus lived out before His disciples, perhaps none was more evident than prayer.

Jesus prayed:

- at His baptism.

*When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." Luke 3:21-22*

- before appointing the twelve apostles.

*One of those days, Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles. Luke 6:12-13*

- after multiplying the loaves and fish to feed the people.

*After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. Matthew 14:23-24*

- early in the morning.

*Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Mark 1:35*

- in the garden of Gethsemane.

*Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray. Matthew 26:36*

- on the cross.

*Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. And they divided up his clothes by casting lots." Luke 23:34*

Read Luke 11:1-13.

How does Jesus teach His disciples to begin a time of prayer? (v. 2)

What are some things for which disciples are to pray? (vv. 2-4)

In the example Jesus shares in verses 5-8, why is the man given the bread? (v. 8)

What do we learn about prayer from verses 9 and 10?

What encouragement does Jesus give us in verses 11 – 13?

Why do you think He specifically tells us the Father will “give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?” (v. 13)

Let each member of your BUILD group share one prayer request in which persistent prayer is needed. Pray for one another.

Memorize Luke 11:9-10.

## UNIT 6 THE DISCIPLINE OF FASTING

Fasting is the discipline of going without food in order to seek God more fully. Fasting was practiced by God's people throughout the Bible. Those who fasted include:

- King David (2 Samuel 12:16)
- Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:4)
- Queen Esther (Esther 4:16)
- Daniel (Daniel 10:3-13)
- The apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 6:5)
- Leaders in the early church at Antioch (Acts 13:2)
- And, most importantly, Jesus himself (Matthew 4:2)

In his excellent book, *God's Chosen Fast*, Arthur Wallis notes three types of fasts in the Bible. They are:

- the absolute fast. This is going without food and water. (Acts 9:9)
- the partial fast. This is a restricted diet, and may be preferable for people who are unable to fast for medical reasons. (Daniel 10:3)
- the normal fast. This is to abstain from food, but not from water. We assume this is how Jesus fasted at the beginning of His ministry since the Bible says, "After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." (Matthew 4:2)

What is the purpose of fasting?

- To humble ourselves before the Lord and draw closer to Him
- To receive guidance and direction (Daniel 9:2,3,21-22, Acts 13:2)
- To gain increased power in prayer. Many people have noticed that faith in God is strengthened during a fast.

How long should you fast?

There is not clear guidance in the Bible regarding the length of a fast. Some people fasted three days. Jesus fasted forty days. The important thing is that your heart attitude be

right and that your fasting be joined with prayer and the study of God's Word. You may find great benefit in fasting just one meal, if that time is spent in prayer.

Read Isaiah 58:1-12 and Matthew 6:16-18.

In the passage from Matthew, what guidance does Jesus give about the right attitude when fasting? (vv. 16-18)

What is the promised benefit for one who fasts with right motives? (v. 18)

In Isaiah 58, God is speaking through the prophet to show the people the error of their ways. Why has their fasting been displeasing in God's sight? (vv. 3-4)

What is God looking for in the life of one who is fasting properly? (vv. 6-7)

Discuss how we might apply verses 6 and 7 when fasting.

What benefits are associated with fasting with the right attitude and actions? (vv. 8-12)



Consider setting apart a time to fast at least one meal this week. Be sure to choose a time when you can pray and read God's Word. Ask the Lord if He has a specific prayer focus for your fast.

Recommended reading: *God's Chosen Fast*, by Arthur Wallis

Memorize verse Isaiah 58:6.

## UNIT 7 THE POWER FOR A DISCIPLE'S LIFE

Beginning in Romans Chapter 7, the apostle Paul talks about his own struggle to live a godly life. He admits that, "When I want to do good, evil is right there with me." (v. 21) He admits that he delights in God's law in his mind, but is at war with "the law of sin at work within my members" (that is, members of his body). (vv. 22-23) In Romans Chapter 8, he explains how a disciple of Jesus can live victoriously in this life.

Read Romans 8:1-17.

What does this passage tell us Jesus accomplished for us on the cross? (vv. 3-4) (See also Galatians 3:10-14.)

What is the difference between a person who lives "according to the sinful nature" and one who lives "according to the Spirit?" (v. 5)

How can a disciple possibly live in such a way as to please God? (vv. 6-9)

What do you think it means to be controlled by the Spirit? (v. 9)

What encouragement do we find in verses 10 and 11?

What is the “obligation” of a disciple of Jesus Christ? (vv. 12-13)

What is one key piece of evidence that we are “sons of God?” (vv. 14-16)

Read Romans 8:28-32.

What specific encouragement do you find here regarding God’s purpose for you as a disciple of Jesus?

Romans Chapter 8 helps us understand that we cannot live victoriously as disciples of Jesus Christ in our own strength. Jesus himself said, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5) Our ability to live fruitful, Christ-honoring lives comes from our complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit. How do we express this dependence upon the Holy Spirit and receive His empowering?

1. Acknowledge your need for, and faith in, Jesus’ work on the cross for you.
2. Acknowledge your inadequacy to live as His disciple apart from His empowering presence.
3. In faith, ask the Holy Spirit to fill and empower you to live as a disciple of Jesus. Thank Him for doing this.
4. Remember that it is God who is at work to conform you “to the likeness of his Son.” (Romans 8:29)

Memorize Romans 8:28-29.

## UNIT 8 WALKING IN THE LIGHT—THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF REPENTANCE

Though “repent” is an unpopular word in our culture, it is a beautiful word when understood in light of God’s provision for our forgiveness of sin. To repent means “to change one’s mind.” It calls for a recognition of our sins and a turning from them to God and His ways.

John the Baptist, whose preaching was to prepare the way for Jesus, commanded people to, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” (Matthew 3:2) After John was put in prison, Jesus proclaimed the very same words. (Matthew 4:17)

On the day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” (Acts 2:38) The apostle Paul reminded the elders of the early church at Ephesus that, “I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.” (Acts 20:21) Paul explained to the Corinthians that “godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret.” (2 Corinthians 7:10)

Repentance calls for:

- a recognition of our own sinfulness.
- a recognition of God’s absolute holiness.
- a willingness to turn from our ways to God’s ways.

As the Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:19, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”

Repentance is a necessary part of our coming to saving faith in Jesus Christ. But it is also a vital part of the ongoing spiritual development of a disciple. Repentance and forgiveness are God’s remedy for our ongoing cleansing from sin and freedom from a guilty conscience. This truth is explained in our passage for this week.

Read 1 John, Chapter 1.

Do you think it is possible for a person to truly know God and yet have no remorse for ongoing sin? (v. 6) Why or why not?

What do you think it means to “walk in the light, as He is in the light”?

What is the condition of a person who claims he never sins? (vv. 8 and 10) (See also Romans 3:10,23.)

Re-read verse 9. How can God be “faithful and just” and still not hold our sins against us? (See 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18.)

How might the promise of verse 9 help free us from a guilty conscience?

Why is it important that our consciences be clear? (See Hebrews 9:14.)

Discuss how you might apply verse 9 to your life. Pray for one another to be empowered by God to increasingly “walk in the light.”

Memorize 1 John 1:9.

## UNIT 9 HOLINESS—BECOMING MORE LIKE OUR LORD

Last week's study on "repentance" leads naturally into the subject of holiness. The passage from 1 John we read last week tells us that none of us is without sin. (1:8, 10) Yet, the Bible commands us to be holy. (Read 1 Peter 1:15-16.) The basic meaning of holiness is "separation to God." To become holy is to become increasingly separated from this world and its ways unto God. The theological word for this process is "sanctification." Sanctification (related to the words "saint" and "sanctuary") is the process by which God makes us more like Himself. It is important to note that sanctification is a process. We are regenerated by the Holy Spirit ("saved", or "born-again") in a moment in time. Yet, we are being sanctified as God works in us throughout our lives as believers.

Many a Christian has doubted his salvation when, after conversion to Christ, he committed some sin. While willful, continued sinning, without remorse, is a valid reason to doubt the genuineness of one's salvation experience, the commission of a sin is not. It has been wisely said that, "God catches His fish before He cleans them!" Conversion is a doorway into a life of sanctification. As we seek to better know God and His ways, His Spirit empowers us to live lives of holiness.

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 and 1 Corinthians 6:15-20.

What reasons do these passages give for avoiding sexual immorality?

Why is it so dishonoring to God when a Christian sins sexually? (See 1 Cor. 6:18-20.)

What should be our response when facing temptation to sin sexually? (1 Cor. 6:18)

It is important to remember that we do not face temptations in our own strength. God gives us His Holy Spirit (note 1 Thess. 4:8) to empower us to live holy lives. When facing temptation, it is important to remember these truths:

1. God will not let us be tempted beyond what we can bear. (1 Cor. 10:13)
2. We should avoid those situations in which we are likely to be tempted. (Read Proverbs 5:7-8 and Proverbs 7:6-9.)
3. We should fill our minds with God's truth to strengthen us when we face temptation. (Proverbs 7:1-5) This is one reason we memorize Scripture in BUILD!
4. Victory comes through surrender to God. As we humble ourselves before the Lord, and acknowledge our need for His help, He will empower us to resist the devil. (James 4:6-7)

Discuss how you can pray for and support your fellow BUILD team members in your pursuit of holiness. A good prayer is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24: "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it."

Memorize 1 Peter 1:15-16.

## UNIT 10 THE DISCIPLE AND THE LAW OF LOVE

No matter how “clean” a person’s life may be, how free from outward immorality, no Christian can be called “holy” without walking in love toward others. The apostle Paul, writing to the church at Thessalonica, affirmed this when he wrote, “And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father.” (1 Thessalonians 3:12-13, ESV)

The Gospel of Matthew records the instance of a Pharisee putting Jesus to the test by asking Him which commandment in the Law was the greatest (Mt. 22:35-36). Jesus replied by citing the Old Testament command to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” (Mt. 22:38) Then Jesus added, “And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Mt. 22:39-40) Jesus makes it clear that simply loving God is not enough. We must also love our neighbor.

Jesus said more about this “law of love” in John 13:34-35: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” We see these valuable truths in Jesus’ words:

1. Loving one another is not an option for His disciples. It is a command.
2. Our model for loving others is Jesus’ love for us.
3. Our obedience to this command will be a witness to the world.

Read Matthew 5:43-48, 1 John 4:19-21, and Ephesians 5:25-33.

In the passage from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5), Jesus sets the bar for loving others very high. Why does He say we must love even our enemies?

What could be rightly understood about one who claims to love God yet hates his brother? (1 John 4:19-21)



In Ephesians 5:25, we see a vital key to having a healthy Christian marriage. What do you think it means for a husband to love his wife “just as Christ loved the church”?

Discuss what these passages tell us about the nature of love. (Is it a feeling, a commitment, or something else?)

How can we possibly fulfill these challenging “love commands”? (Romans 5:5)

Loving others does not mean we will be weak, easily intimidated, or lacking in convictions. To the contrary, we will live with a strength that only God can supply. The world is waiting to see people who live this way.

As we consider the “law of love” for Jesus’ disciples, it may be helpful to ask these questions:

1. Is there anyone—a co-worker, neighbor, family member, or even an “enemy”—whom I do not love?
2. If married, am I loving my spouse as Christ loved the church?
3. Am I relying on my own strength to love others?

Pray for one another to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to love others. (Romans 5:5)

Memorize John 13:34-35.

## UNIT 11 THE DISCIPLE AS A PEACEMAKER

Jesus commanded us to love all people, even our enemies. However, He did not say we had to agree with everyone. Jesus himself was often in conflict with the religious leaders of His day. In fact, He was the cause of much of that conflict!

Being a disciple of Jesus Christ does not mean we must avoid all conflict. Rather, it means we must deal with our conflicts in ways that are biblical.

Some conflict may arise because of our commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul wrote, "Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." (2 Timothy 3:12) When we find ourselves at odds with others due to our faith, we are not to compromise. Rather, we should stand strong and pray for those who persecute us. (Matthew 5:44)

Other conflict, however, may arise between sincere Christians. Whether due to misunderstanding, poor communication, pride, or selfishness, we are called to make every effort to restore peace in our relationships with other believers. Our Bible passages for this week will give us insight into how we can do this.

Read Matthew 7:1-5 and Matthew 18:15-17.

Based on Matthew 7:1-5, how could we define "hypocrite"?

Does this passage teach that we should never speak to a "brother" about his sin?  
(Note v. 5.)

What does the passage teach us about searching our own hearts before we speak to others about theirs?

In the passage from Matthew 18, what does Jesus say to do when you feel your brother has sinned against you? (v. 15)

What should be the goal of our confrontation? (v. 15)

The next two steps in the Matthew 18 passage (“take one or two others along” and “tell it to the church”) obviously apply to serious matters that lead to church discipline when not settled one-on-one. It is the responsibility of church leaders to come alongside a member who has been hurt by sin and to seek to bring the one who sinned to repentance. When repentance is not shown, the leaders may put the unrepentant member out of the church. Always, the goal of such discipline is to restore the sinner to right fellowship with God and others, and to preserve the purity and peace of the church. The call to use such strong measures shows God’s great desire for His people to live in harmony with one another.

The Bible says a great deal more about healthy relationships among Christians than we can cover here. These biblical principles will help guide us toward honoring God in the ways we relate to others.

### My Commitment to Biblical Values in Relationships

1. By God’s grace, I will seek to live at peace with everyone.

*“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” Romans 12:18*

2. I will overlook minor offenses, unless it would be harmful to the offender for me to do so.

*“A man’s wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.” Proverbs 19:11*

3. With God’s help, I will search my own heart (thoughts, attitudes) before confronting someone else.

*“You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.” Matthew 7:5*

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23-24*

4. I will confront another person with humility, gentleness, and love, and with his or her best interests at heart.

*"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted."* Galatians 6:1

*"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ."* Ephesians 4:15

*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."* Philippians 2:3-4

5. I will be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.

*"My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."* James 1:1

6. I will not seek to take revenge.

*"Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord."* Romans 12:19

7. If I am in an unresolved dispute with another Christian, I will seek the involvement of "the saints" rather than the secular courts.

See Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-8.

Discuss how you might apply these principles to your marriage or other important relationships, and pray for one another.

Memorize Romans 12:18.

For a deeper study on the subject of peacemaking, I highly recommend Ken Sande's *The Peacemaker*. This excellent book is a very thorough guide to resolving personal conflict in a biblical manner. *The Peacemaker* was the source for a number of my points in this BUILD unit.

## UNIT 12 THE DISCIPLE AS A STEWARD

“Stewardship” is a word that is most often associated with church fundraising efforts. But the Bible teaches us that stewardship is something that affects all areas of a disciple’s life.

In biblical times, a steward was a household manager. He was entrusted with his master’s possessions, and was expected to be faithful in his management. He knew he would be required to give his master an accounting for his stewardship.

The Bible teaches us that every good and perfect gift is from God. (James 1:17) He entrusts us with His gifts and expects us to be faithful with them during our time on earth. One day, we will give the Lord an accounting for our use of what He has given us.

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

Who was the owner of the property entrusted to the servants? (v. 14)

As a group, make a list of some of the things that you think God has entrusted to us.

In the parable you read, what was the master’s reply to the servant who invested the five talents? (v. 21)

What about the one who invested two talents? (v. 23)

Do you see any significance in the fact that these two servants heard the same words of commendation from the master?

How might this help us when we feel someone else has been given more “talents” in life than we have?

Why did the servant who had been given one talent not put his to use? (v. 25)

The master’s reply to this servant may seem harsh to us. (vv. 26–30) It may even sound as if Jesus is teaching here that we are saved by our good efforts. But we should not mistakenly believe this in light of other Bible passages that clearly teach we are saved by grace through faith. (Romans 5:1-2, Galatians 2:21, Ephesians 2:8-9) The important thing to realize in this parable is that the wicked, lazy servant had a wrong attitude about the master. He considered the master to be “hard” and unjust. (v. 24) His wrong belief about the master resulted in his lack of love and devotion to the master’s work.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we have been given much. Our time, our abilities, our financial resources, and even our influence are gifts from God. The wise steward recognizes this and seeks to use his or her God-given gifts so as to best glorify God. The steward lives with an awareness that he will one day give an accounting to his Lord and Master for his stewardship.

Recommend reading: *The Treasure Principle*, by Randy Alcorn  
“Questions and Answers about Tithing” (available at ROCC)

Memorize Romans 14:12.