

Charles Wesley Born: December 28, 1707, Epworth, Lincolnshire, England. Died: March 29, 1788, London, England. Charles Wesley wrote over 6,000 hymns. Like most hymnists, his works were frequently altered. In the preface to the 1779 Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists, his brother [John](#) wrote: "I beg leave to mention a thought which has been long upon my mind, and which I should long ago have inserted in the public papers, had I not been unwilling to stir up a nest of hornets. Many gentlemen have done my brother and me (though without naming us) the honor to reprint many of our hymns. Now they are perfectly welcome to do so, provided they print them just as they are. But I desire they would not attempt to mend them, for they are really not able. None of them is able to mend either the sense or the verse. Therefore, I must beg of them these two favors: either to let them stand just as they are, to take things for better or worse, or to add the true reading in the margin, or at the bottom of the page, that we may no longer be accountable either for the nonsense or for the doggerel of other men."

Difficult Discipleship Series

Welcome to the GCI Bible Study section of our website. Before you read or download any Bible studies we ask that you take a moment to read the following...

First: All GCI studies though copyrighted are offered free of cost for any who wish to use them for personal or group Bible studies. There are however limitations.

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Matthew 10:8-10 "...freely you received, freely give. Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, or a bag for your journey, or even two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support."

It is the conviction of GCI that our ministry is one of faith. As such we do not charge for the preaching, teaching nor study of the Word of God. We ask only that you remain faithful to this principle as you teach, preach and distribute the study of the Lord's holy, infallible, inerrant, written Word.

Second: You may find these studies to be personally challenging. This is their purpose and we ask that you not dilute their difficulty in any way.

Many wish to discuss the Bible in the context of their thoughts, opinions, feelings and experiences. Few want to discuss the Bible in the context of understanding what the passage is saying for the purpose of personal obedience and application.

This is the purpose of the difficult discipleship series. It is written not for the informal discussion group or self-help support group but rather for the serious Bible student who wishes to study with others and in so doing go deep into the Word of God. When you have finished with the Bible study you will know what the Bible says on this topic, you may not like what it says, but you will know what it says. This above all other reasons is responsible for its length and challenging format.

It is indeed a difficult series and is written for the serious Bible student. By serious I do not mean mature but rather one who is willing to apply the same work ethic to his Bible study as he does to the other areas of his life which are important to him. When I speak at conferences I as a rule offer a special early morning meeting to any who wish to come. I am consistently told that people will not come – students will not get up early, professionals will not get up early, young married men will not get up early, this or that ethnic group or culture will not get up early, yet at every conference there is always a sincere group of men who will get up early for an opportunity to go deeper. They are willing to work, to pay the price, they are serious and want to get the most out of the conference.

It is the same with Bible study. I am consistently told that in this day and age men will simply not study a difficult discipleship series such as this. They will simply not give the time, students will not give the time, young married men will not give the time, professionals will not give the time, this or that ethnic group or culture will not give the time, yet I find in every social, ethnic or age group laymen who will give the time to do difficult Bible study. They sincerely want to know what God's Word says and are willing to apply the same work ethic for success in discipleship as they apply to the other areas of work and leisure in their lives. It is to these men that this study is written.

Where in traditional studies one verse is given, the DDS will supply many. Where other studies will ask for your feelings which can be quickly recorded and shared, the DDS will ask for the mind of God and the expectation of God which requires careful and thoughtful consideration. Where other studies may ask you, "What does this verse mean to you?" the DDS will ask "What is the central truth that the Holy Spirit is conveying in this verse?" Where other studies may ask you, "How does this verse make you feel?" the DDS will ask you, "How can you apply and obey this verse in your everyday life?" Where other studies may assure you, "That there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers" the DDS assumes just the opposite, that God indeed does have a clearly articulated will, as revealed from His Word and that anything contrary to the revealed Word of God is wrong and that which conforms to the clearly revealed Word of God is right. Where other studies may be discussed easily with a quick once over the night before or with no preparation at all, the DDS will require hours of preparation if the disciple is to be able to contribute intelligently to the study. Where in other studies the most important thing, when all is said and done, is that you have shared an opinion and in doing so feel emotionally affirmed in that opinion, in the DDS the most important thing is that you have come to understand what the Word of God says and be able to articulate this clearly to others. Where other studies will presuppose a consumer approach to Bible study, whereby the student's first prerequisite is a pleasing package, eye catching graphics and a difficulty level which leaves him feeling relaxed, the DDS presupposes a disciples approach to Bible study, a desire first and foremost to know and obey the Word of God, with the expectation of format to be that which facilitates the study and obedience of God's Word and an indifference to marketing and packaging beyond that one overriding desire.

In this study there are indeed right and wrong answers. There are right and wrong convictions and opinions. For the DDS it is not enough to feel genuinely sincere about a subject but rather the understanding of and conformity to the Word of God is the highest standard. The DDS presupposes that if your thoughts, convictions or belief system contradicts the Word of God, then what you desire is not understanding and affirmation but rather, sound teaching, conviction, rebuke and exhortation. That you would rather feel bad in knowing and doing right than to be made to feel good though you know and do wrong. Many studies tout the claim, "This Bible Study will change your life!" – The author makes no such claim. There have been books on this workbook topic which have come before and books and Bible studies will follow.

I do however make the claim with all boldness and confidence, “Bible Study will change your life!” The Difficult Discipleship Series is not simply a self help manual which uses the occasional Bible verse, as if to say, “See, the Bible can be helpful just like your counselors, psychologists and specialists are.” Rather it lays the doctrinal foundation of Biblical truth for the topic and then follows it with the disciplines of personal discipleship.

If you embrace the doctrinal truths of this study as the revealed Word of God, if you faithfully submit yourself to the personal disciplines of Discipleship contained in this study – Daily Quiet Times Alone With God, Scripture Memory, Review and Meditation, In Depth Personal Bible Study and Application, then I can assure you with confidence that the Word and Prayer – then your life will indeed begin to change. If you embrace these doctrinal truths and disciplines as a lifestyle, then your lifestyle, indeed your life, will be changed. Not because of the uniqueness of the authors teachings but rather because of the power of the foundational doctrines of God and the life changing promises of God’s Word as they pertain to Daily Quiet Times Alone With God, Scripture Memory, Review and Meditation, In Depth Personal Bible Study and Application

The author makes no apologies, although the topic of this particular study in the Difficult Discipleship Study Series is of great importance, the true goal of this and all the studies in this series is to introduce the Christian to the foundational doctrines of our faith and the accompanying disciplines of discipleship in order to begin him on a life long devotion to God through Daily Quiet Times Alone With God, Scripture Memory, Review and Meditation, In Depth Personal Bible Study and Application.

Note on research:

All Quotes are taken from works read by the author. All works were read in their entirety before the quote was selected. No quote books or data basis were used. In the development of these studies, all work is the result of the research, prayer and study of the author.