

Luke 6:17-18 (NLT2)

When they came down from the mountain, the disciples stood with Jesus on a large, level area, surrounded by many of his followers and by the crowds. There were people from all over Judea and from Jerusalem and from as far north as the seacoasts of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and Jesus also cast out many evil spirits.

2000 years ago, people traveled by foot “***from all over Judea and from Jerusalem and from as far north as the seacoasts of Tyre and Sidon***” to hear Jesus teach, even though there were no cars or other forms of transportation, still they travel by foot to listen to Jesus speak and heal them. And why did they travel so far on foot? Because “***when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching.***” **Matthew 7:28 (NLT2)** I mean, come on, if you heard about someone who was speaking and the people said that they were amazed at His words, wouldn't you want to hear Him speak as well?

Even today in other countries, like Africa and India, you hear of people walking for hours, some even for days to get to a small church, simply to hear the word of God being taught. Yet how many today can barely make it out of bed on Sunday to make it to church, and for some they find it easier to watch church online than actually getting cleaned up and dressed and driving to church once a week. Yet wouldn't they walk down the street or even drive for miles to go get something to eat, yet some won't to hear God's word being taught?

Did you know that it's ok to go to church for yourself and to actually get something for yourself when you are there? Doesn't the bible teach us that one purpose of going to church is to be equipped, meaning you are going to get something for yourself, even though the equipping that you receive is to use for the benefit of others. Just as the Holy Spirit has given me the gift of teaching, I use what He has given (equipped) to me to minister to others with that gift.

✠ ***Ephesians 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.***

We all go grocery shopping at least once a week to equip our kitchens cabinets and frig so that we can eat all week. How much more should we go to be equipped with spiritual food for the week ahead?

School just started back up here where I live a few weeks ago. And the reason the kids go to school is to learn. They started out in kindergarten and grade school learning the basics like colors, shapes, numbers, letters, etc.. But as they get older and more advanced in schooling over the years, they will learn how to use those basics that they learned in grade school and apply it to what they want to do in life and to live life. They will eventually take what they learned in Highschool and get more advanced learning in collage.

It's the same with us as Christians. When I first got saved over 40 years ago, I had to read the bible many times and learn the basics of Christianity before I could ever imagine teaching it. As I grew I would get deeper into the word and listening to other teachers/pastors, starting with the basics, and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, here I am teaching the word of God.

But if I never went to church, listened to other pastors/teach, never read the bible, I never would have been able to teach the bible. Yet many become frustrated because they feel they can't do anything, or they simply are not doing anything, and some of them are the ones who make excuses not to go to church, or read the bible, so no wonder they can't do anything.

So, in order to learn and grow as a Christian, you must first become amazed at the words of Jesus (*the crowds were amazed at his teaching*) and have a hunger (*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. Matthew 5:6*) and desire for His word (*I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food. Job 23:12b*), which all comes from a close relationship with Jesus, over all other things.

† **Luke 12:29-31 (NLT2)** *And don't be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don't worry about such things. These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.*