

“...one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” – Luke 11:1

# Discipleship and Spiritual Fatherhood

Part 1



# A Disciple

- A committed follower and student of the Lord Jesus Christ
- A person who has chosen to dedicate their life to the Lord Christ, embracing His teachings and striving to conform their lives to His example
- Discipleship is a lifelong journey of spiritual growth and transformation





# A Disciple of the Lord Christ or the Church?

- Can I be a disciple of the Lord Christ without the Church?
- The early disciples and apostles were the Church
  - “Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” (Eph. 5:23)
- The Lord equated the Church to Himself
  - “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4)
- A key aspect to our discipleship is the submission to spiritual authority and guidance through a spiritual father.





## The Spiritual Father

*“One who climbs a mountain for the first time needs to follow a known route; and he needs to have with him, as companion and guide, someone who has been up before and is familiar with the way. To serve as such a companion and guide is precisely the role of the “Abba” or spiritual father.”*

– Bishop Kalistos Ware

# Spiritual Fatherhood in the Church

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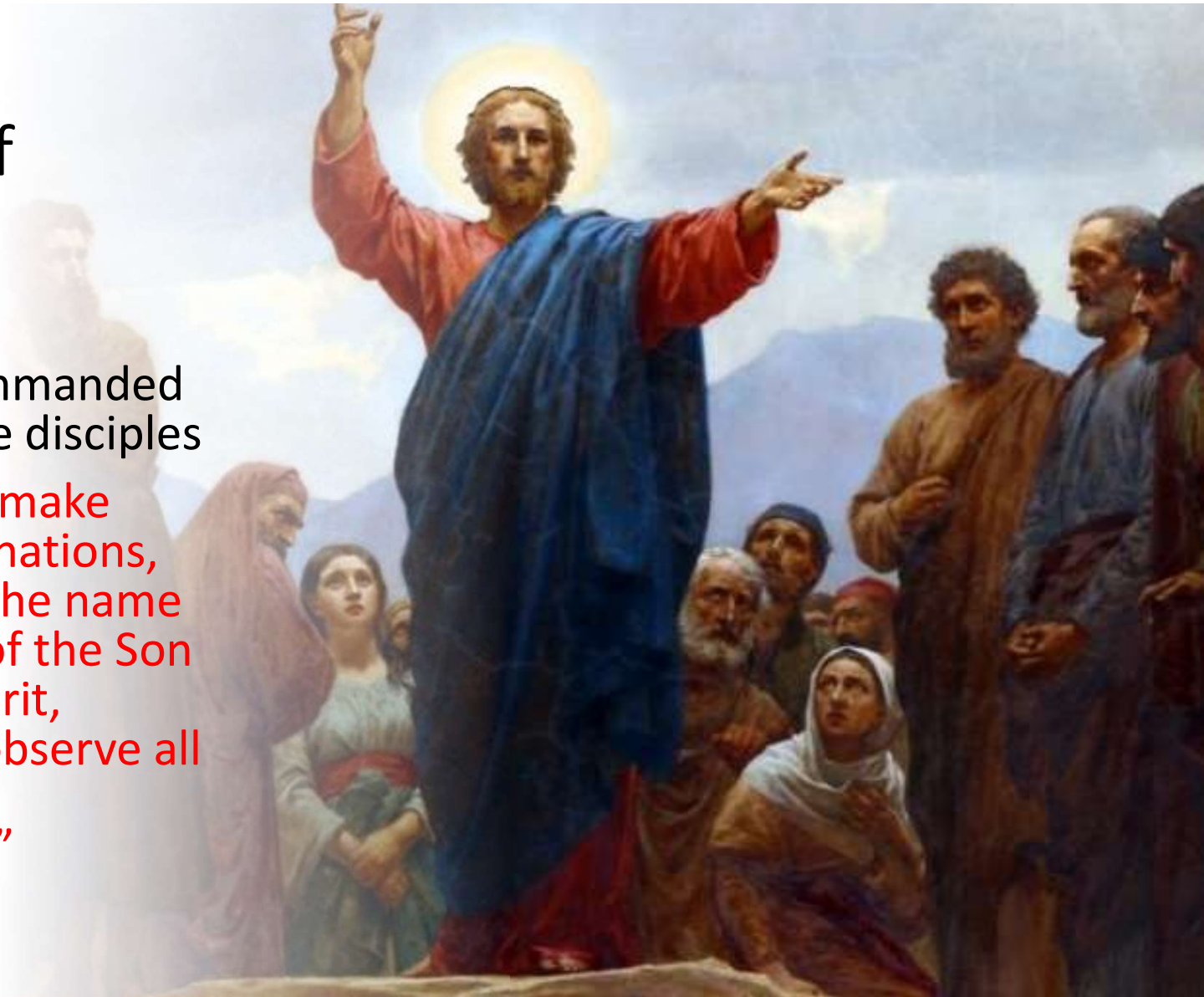
- Every person has a biological father – entry into this life
- Likewise, a Christian ought to have a spiritual father – spiritual rebirth
  - Introduces him into the life in the Lord Christ and guides him along the path of salvation.
- In the ancient Church, most believers received baptism at a mature age
  - Spiritual fathers catechized, baptized, and lead their children in the way of godliness.





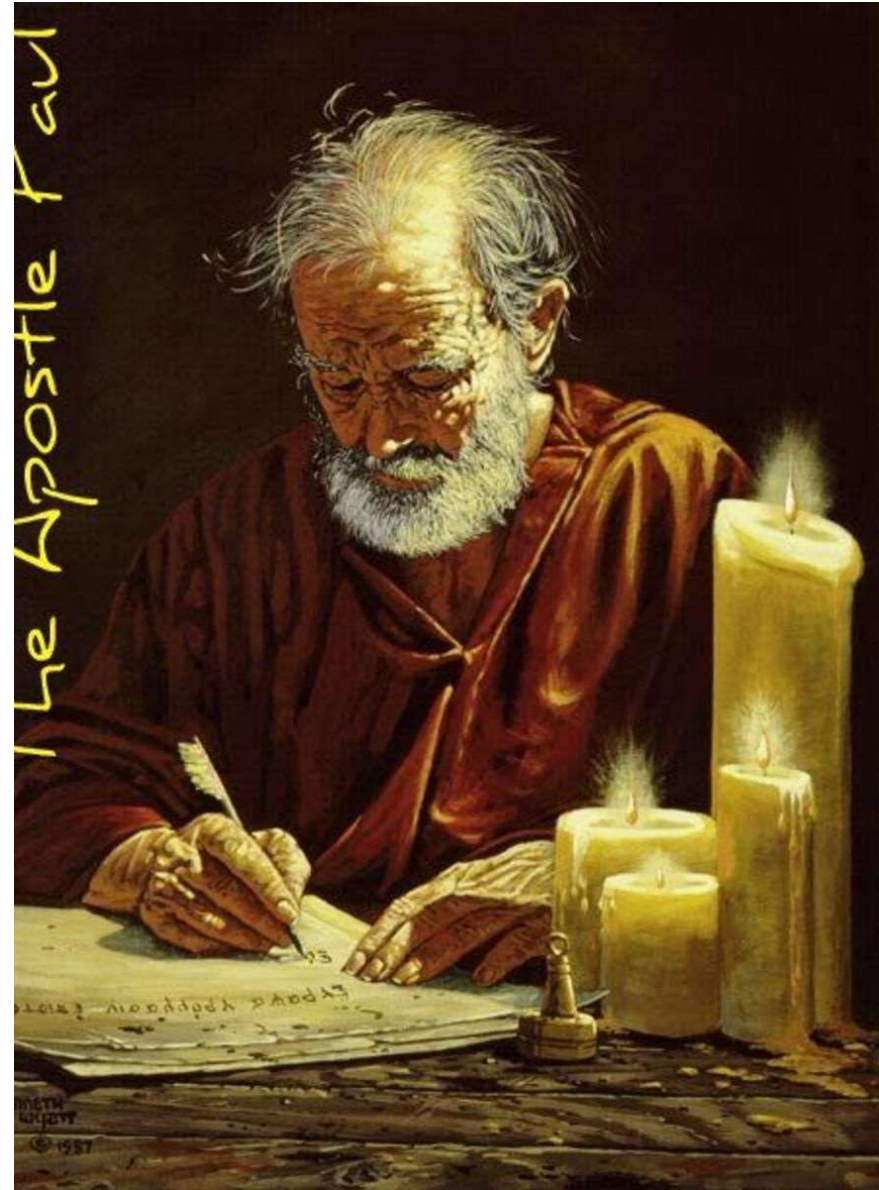
# Biblical Basis of Fatherhood

- The Lord Jesus commanded the Twelve to make disciples
- “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”  
(Matt. 28:19-20)



## Biblical Basis of Fatherhood

- “I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.” (1 Cor. 4:14-15)
- St. Paul was not simply their instructor or teacher, but their father.
- His motive was his paternal love in the Lord Christ.







# Biblical Basis of Fatherhood

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- “...as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” (1 Thes. 2:11-12)

# Biblical Basis of Fatherhood

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- Elijah and Elisha
  - “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.” (2 Kings 2:9)
  - “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” (2 Kings 2:12)
- Moses and Joshua



# Spiritual Father vs. Spiritual Guide

- Should be the same, if possible
  - He knows you best
  - Ex: Primary care physician
- When are they not the same?
  1. Discomfort
  2. Inadequate accessibility
    - *Who is your confession father?*
    - Confessing over the phone
  3. When in need of another father's specialty (e.g., monastic novice)

# Conclusion



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- Next week...
  - Precautions regarding spiritual fatherhood
  - How to benefit from a spiritual father