

## **Discussion Guides.**

We are offering suggestions for group discussion at the end of every section in this 2010 edition of *Raising the Standard*.

1. Readers should look carefully at what the Bible passages quoted actually say. What is their simplest meaning?
2. Readers should ask what the passage meant to those people who were the original receivers of it. How does the first century context influence the meaning of the words and events?
3. Only then should readers try to apply the passage to their own lives in the twenty-first century context. How must I live to please God?

**Placing the way we currently live our own lives alongside what God is teaching us through the Bible (God's own word), comparing the two, and then changing our lives to be more like what we learn we should be, is a great way to progress in Christian discipleship.**

## **Introduction**

Many times I have wondered what it must have been like in 'Barney's Bible class' at Antioch. The class began in Acts 11:22-24. The need for it arose when people tuned in to the Good News about the Lord Jesus and then turned to the Lord themselves.

Barnabas saw evidence that God was at work in the lives of these people (verse 23). His task was then twofold. Firstly, he encouraged them in their new-found relationship with God, and secondly, he helped them in evangelism among the people around and about (verses 23-24).

The class continued for more than a year. Barnabas brought in a young teacher called Saul and the two of them schooled the believers in Christian truth and Christlikeness (verses 25-26). As they raised the standard for Christ, so they raised the standard of Christian living. The Lord gave them great success. The people of Antioch could clearly see the difference between those in the class and those not in it. The students were so much like Jesus Christ and so taken up with his teaching that those who knew them called them 'Christians'.

This **practical discipleship course** has developed from material originally compiled for weekly study classes led by Brenda and Colin Salter for Redruth Baptist Church, Cornwall, England. It is offered here with the prayer that you will be able to grow in your Christian walk and witness as you follow these directions to the Lord Jesus, his word and his will.

**Please study the Bible passages referred to in the text. This book is not a substitute for the Bible, but rather a signpost to it.**

### **Discussion Guide on the Introduction:**

Read Acts 11:19-30.

1. Why do you think Jerusalem's church leaders sent Barnabas to Antioch when they heard that so many people had become believers?
2. As a person begins the Christian life (a life to honour Jesus Christ) what kind of things may they have to learn to do or not to do?
3. What do you think Barnabas meant when he "encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts"? verse 23.
4. Why was such encouragement necessary?
5. Give some suggestions as to why the Believers were called Christians in Antioch?
6. The last four verses show those new Believers in Antioch responding to a need elsewhere. In what way does becoming a real Christian influence how we use our money?