



Discipleship Study Questions

Week 2

Have you ever wondered what it really means to be a disciple of Jesus? Why is it important? What do we do? How do we act? What is our responsibility? We are going to explore these questions and look at the template Jesus lays out in scripture for what it looks like to be His follower, His disciple, and how that plays out in our lives here and now.

Hide God's Word in Your Heart:

Individual: Take a few days and do your best to memorize, or deeply familiarize yourself with, the scripture passage for the week.

Group: Choose one person from the group to commit the week's scripture passage to memory, or thoroughly summarize it in their own words, in order to present it to the group the following week.

Read the story:

Individual: After you've committed the passage, or the essence of the passage, to memory, read two different translations of the scripture for the week.

Group: At your next group meeting, have two different group members read the story using different Bible translations.

Tell the story:

Individual: Recite the story aloud from memory, or tell it to a friend or family member.

Group: Introduce the person who has learned the story for this week. Be ready to assist them if they get stuck at any point.

Rebuild the story:

Individual: Re-read the story to fact check yourself.

Group: Use questions to help the group highlight the main points of the story and correct any omissions or misrepresentations of the story. The point is not to point out the story teller's mistakes, but rather to point people to the Word to ensure everyone understands it accurately.

Dig into the Word:

Individual: Work through the questions and pray about what God reveals to you through His word. Discuss with a Christian friend or family member, if you choose.

Group: Work through the questions as a group, celebrating the work God is already doing in each person's life, and encouraging each other to trust Him in the places that need growth.

Small Group Guidelines

This is a Safe Group

Confidentiality is key—what is said in the group stays in the group. Be aware how you are affecting the environment with your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing.

No Crosstalk

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, phone time, texting etc.

Listen

Let's value one another by listening to what is being shared. Allow a pause after someone shares to allow them to finish and others to consider what was said. Eye contact and body posture play key roles in creating a positive or negative group environment.

No Rescuing or Fixing

We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Avoid the tendency to rescue when someone is struggling to get the words out or shares a struggle or conviction.

Use "I" Statements

It's easy to talk about the issues of others, or respond with "we," "us," or "the church," but for us to grow as disciples and build relationships, we want to use "I" statements.

Don't Over-talk

We want to create time for all members of the group to participate in the discussion. Be careful not to always be the first responder or regularly give long responses.

Fight for Relationship

It's not if conflict or hurt feelings will happen, but when. We commit to fight for relationship with each other. Go to the person and share your struggle or seek wise advice if you are not sure how to handle the conflict.

Read Matthew 16: 21-27

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What is Jesus teaching the disciples?

What are you learning personally?

What might God be calling you to do with what you've learned this week?

Going Deeper:

What was the result of Peter setting his mind on the things of man, instead of the things of God? Can you think of a time in your life where your mind was set on the things of man? What was the result?

The statement Jesus made in v24 would have been startling, to say the least. The cross was a very public one-way ticket to death. The modern equivalent might say something like, *"To be my disciple, you must turn away from your own desires, carry your electric chair and imitate me."*

What are the practical implications of denying yourself and taking up your cross? What does that look like in your life? Is this a one-time occurrence? Why or why not?

Take an inventory of the instructions Jesus gives through v.24-27, then make a contrary list of what each of the opposite commands would be. Picture what life would look like on both sides. Which side does your life more closely match up with? Pray that God would help you align more closely with the side of Jesus and holy sacrifice, that ultimately leads to life and glory.

Prayer:

Father, thank you for ensuring we know what it looks like to be a disciple. Help us to practice denying ourselves and following you, so that we can truly see and experience the fullness in relationship with you that you hold for us. Help us to set our mind on the things of you, and maintain that focus, so that we can accomplish this call. Thank you that in death, we will find life in you that is beyond what we can even imagine. In the name of Jesus, amen.