

Section 5: What is Discipleship

Aim:

To work out what discipleship means for us today. By looking at New Testament examples we will learn what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and, from the Scriptures, we will gain some of the tools to enable us to work out our discipleship in our togetherness and interdependence.

1) The call to discipleship - obedience

Read Mark 2:13-17

What did Jesus say to Levi (Matthew)? How did Jesus explain his reasons for calling Levi? What did he do in response to Christ's call? What questions did Levi ask before responding?

What did it require of Levi to follow in this way? Discuss the link between faith and obedience.

Read Matthew 14:22-33. How do faith and obedience work out in the life of Peter?

Why is it sometimes so difficult to have faith? There is a good example of this in Matthew 19:16-22.

In Luke 9:57-62 there are three would-be disciples. Look at each of them in turn and decide what hinders true discipleship.

What excuses do we make to that single-minded obedience to sell all that we have and to take up our cross daily and follow him? Write down your answers.

2) The cost of discipleship – the Cross

Read Mark 8:31-38

What does denying oneself mean?

Baptism is a symbol of our death to self and the new life in Christ with new standards and new priorities. Read Romans 6:1-8. What are our new standards and new priorities?

"The call of Christ, his baptism, sets the Christian in the middle of the daily arena against sin and the devil. Every day he encounters new temptations, and every day he must suffer anew for Christ's sake. The wounds and scars he receives in the fray are living tokens of this participation in the cross of his Lord." (Source: The Cost of Discipleship' by Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

3) The journey together into Discipleship – Interdependence

What does Christian community mean to you? How much do you feel you belong in your Christian community? How much do you want to belong? What does communion mean?

What did interdependence mean to the early church (see e.g. Acts 2:42-45)?

Look at Romans 14:10, 12. To whom do we have to give account? What does that mean?

4) Building lasting significant relationships

What makes for secure and stable relationships in church?

What should be the focus of these relationships and how do we build them?

What sort of relationships need to be built in church?

What do you need to do to get yourself into a group where you can be vulnerable and honest?

5) The Biblical basis for interdependence

Here are just some Scriptures that tell us what interdependence means in the context of the Body of Christ. Look at each in turn. How should we model these in church?

Ephesians 5:18-21;

Colossians 3:16

1 Thessalonians 5:11;

James 5:16

6) Interdependence in relationships

How much do we trust people close to us with our secrets, failures and struggles?

How much would it help our discipleship, our journey into holiness, if we did?

Going on:

What do you need to do in your Christian life to ensure that you are following Jesus in the way he wants you to go?