

Community Part 7: Discipleship

How to Use

The goal with these discussion guides during the next few weeks, is that with your group or a few others, to have honest and authentic discussions around this idea of living life together as a “new family in Christ.” The hope is that this resource is not simply a study guide to further discuss the previous weekend’s message or a certain text in Scripture, but instead an application guide of how to further flesh out and live out God’s vision for biblical community. Each week will have a brief overview to read together, 2-3 discussion questions and a suggested practice to implement with your group.

The discussion questions have been crafted in a way to help get past the surface level response we can default to and to dig into honest and perhaps challenging conversations. You might not get through them all each week and that’s okay. Allow for some space for the Spirit to work and to give time for the conversation to reach a more intimate level. We would encourage you to invite the people you’re walking through these guides with to perhaps be a little more vulnerable than they might normally be. If your group size is large, consider breaking up into a few smaller groups to better facilitate honest conversations.

Our goal for the suggested practice each week is to help establish some new rhythms and ways to live out this idea of biblical community. Our challenge to you is to try these practices through the entire 9 weeks of this series. Perhaps at the end discuss with your group about how these practices went and what they might want to continue doing.

We would also encourage you to start each discussion with a time of prayer, inviting the Spirit to work in you and your group’s heart and minds around this topic of community.

Overview (Read this aloud together)

Leader: John 15:1-8, Mark 8:34-35

“To follow Jesus is to become his apprentice. It’s to organize your entire life around three driving goals: Be with Jesus. Become like him. Do as he did.

Apprenticeship to Jesus - that is, following Jesus - is a whole-life process of being with Jesus for the purpose of becoming like him and carrying on his work in the world. It’s a lifelong journey in which we gradually learn to say and do the kinds of things Jesus said and did as we apprentice under him in every facet of our lives.” - John Mark Comer, Practicing the Way

As individuals and as a community, are we increasingly becoming more and more like Jesus, or do we more and more reflect the world and culture around us? Or put another way, is Jesus looking more and more like us?

Our primary aim together is to make following Jesus the main point of our lives. As a community, we are called to love and embody Jesus to one another, to point back to the "true vine", and to bear fruit into the lives of each other and those around us.

Imagine what kind of community we could become together if we really gave our whole lives to following Jesus. How might that impact our neighbors and the world around us?

Discussion Questions

Does the idea of organizing our *entire* life around following Jesus challenge us? How so? If we're being honest, might there be some areas in our life where we are reluctant to changing or giving up for the sake of becoming better apprentices?

What are some areas that we are growing in our discipleship to Jesus? What are some areas in our life where we feel stuck? How can we as a community rally around one another?

How can we as a community not just learn more or talk about what it looks like to follow Jesus, but to actively embody it to one another and to those around us? Is there a rhythm we can incorporate into our group to move towards this?

Practice for This Week

For this week's practice, take an inventory of what you listen to, the content you watch, who you follow on social media, books you're currently reading, your spending habits, who you spend the most time with, your schedules, etc. Consider how these things might be forming or deforming you. Is it helpful to your discipleship to Jesus or does it distract or get in the way of following Him? Perhaps now is a good time to reorient and reorganize some things in your life and daily rhythms to better apprentice under Jesus. If it feels overwhelming, start small and pick one thing to reorganize. Build from there.

During the week, consider getting together with a few others from your group to share what some things that might be getting in the way of our discipleship to Jesus and pray for one another in those areas.