A SIX-WEEK DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

FOLLOW

KNOW JESUS. FOLLOW JESUS. MAKE DISCIPLES.

WEEK 2

ABIDE IN JESUS

Scripture & Prayer

BIG QUESTION

How do I develop a daily relationship with Jesus?

CONNECT

Welcome Back to FOLLOW

Last week we began with the Gospel—what Jesus has done for us and what it means to respond to Him through repentance and faith. But following Jesus is not only about beginning a relationship with Him. It is learning to live every day in relationship with Him.

> **Jesus didn't save you merely to know about Him. He saved you to know Him and walk with Him.**

This week is about one of the most important rhythms in the life of a disciple: learning to abide in Jesus through His Word and prayer.

What is one daily habit or routine that helps keep you grounded or focused?

What usually makes it difficult for you to consistently spend time with God?

WORD

1. ABIDE IN JESUS

Read John 15:1–11

On the night before the cross, Jesus used the picture of a vine and its branches to describe the relationship His followers are meant to have with Him. A branch does not produce life on its own. It receives life by remaining connected to the vine.

According to Jesus, what happens when a branch remains connected to the vine?

What does Jesus say we can accomplish apart from Him?

What Does It Mean to Abide?

To abide means to remain, stay, continue, or make your home in something. Jesus is describing an ongoing life of dependence on Him. We do not graduate from needing Jesus. We grow by learning to depend on Him more deeply.

> **The Christian life begins with dependence on Jesus and deepens through dependence on Jesus.**

Abiding is more than having a "quiet time; a consistent rhythm of Scripture and prayer helps us intentionally remain aware of Jesus, listen to Him, speak with Him, and respond to Him throughout the day.

What is the difference between spending time with God to complete a religious task and spending time with God to know Him?

2. MEET GOD IN HIS WORD

Read 2 Timothy 3:16–17

The Bible is not merely a collection of helpful religious writings. Scripture is breathed out by God. Through His Word, God reveals who He is, shows us what is true, corrects what is wrong in us, trains us in righteousness, and equips us to live as His people.

What is the difference between reading the Bible to know about God and reading the Bible to know God?

What makes consistently reading the Bible difficult for you?

Maybe you don't enjoy reading. Maybe you don't know where to begin. Maybe the Bible feels difficult to understand. Maybe you're distracted or busy. Maybe you've never developed the habit. Maybe you start strong and then stop. Maybe you're simply not making it a priority.

Which of those barriers do you most need to address in order to consistently spend time in God's Word?

Read Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:22

What do these passages teach about the way God's Word works in the life of a disciple?

> **Don't read the Bible just to finish a chapter. Read the Bible to know the God who wrote it.**

Bible reading is not just about information. We want to understand what God has said so that His truth shapes what we believe, how we think, and how we live.

> **The goal isn't to become someone who is good at reading the Bible. The goal is to become someone who knows God through His Word.**

A Simple Way to Read the Bible

You do not need to be a Bible scholar to begin studying Scripture. A simple method called OIA can help you slow down and engage the text carefully.

OBSERVATION

What does the text say? Look carefully. Who is speaking or writing? Who is being addressed? What is happening? Are there repeated words, commands, promises, contrasts, or important ideas?

INTERPRETATION

What does the text mean? Consider the context and ask what the author intended to communicate to the original audience. We do not begin by asking, "What does this mean to me?" We first ask, "What does God's Word mean?"

APPLICATION

How should I respond? Is there a truth to believe, a command to obey, a sin to confess or avoid, an example to follow, or a step of obedience to take?

> **The goal of Bible reading isn't just information. It's transformation through truth and obedience.**

Read James 1:22 again. What happens when we hear God's Word but do not respond in obedience?

DISCUSS

Which part of OIA—Observation, Interpretation, or Application—would help you most in the way you currently read Scripture? Why?

3. MEET GOD IN PRAYER

Read Philippians 4:6–7

Prayer is how we talk with our Father. Because of Jesus, believers have access to God. We do not have to impress Him, perform for Him, or find perfect words. We come to Him as children coming to a loving Father.

> **Prayer isn't performing for God. Prayer is spending time with your Father.**

What does Philippians 4:6–7 tell us to do with our worries and concerns?

What does this passage say can happen as we bring our needs to God with thanksgiving?

A Simple Way to Pray

Prayer does not require a formula, but the ACTS framework can help give direction to your time with God.

ADORATION

Praise God for who He is. Before asking God for something, slow down and focus your attention on God Himself. Read Psalm 145:3.

CONFESSION

Agree with God about your sin. Bring your sin honestly before Him and receive the forgiveness that is ours through Christ. Read 1 John 1:9.

THANKSGIVING

Thank God for what He has done. Gratitude reminds us of God's faithfulness and daily provision. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

SUPPLICATION

Bring your needs and the needs of others to God. Ask, seek, and knock, trusting your Father with what matters to you. Read Matthew 7:7.

How could beginning prayer with adoration change the way you approach God?

Don't Walk Alone

Read Hebrews 10:24–25

A daily relationship with Jesus is personal, but it was never meant to be isolated. God uses other believers to encourage us, challenge us, pray with us, and stir us toward love and obedience. We will explore biblical community more fully in Week 4, but abiding in Jesus includes staying connected to His people.

What is one way this group can encourage one another to stay faithful in Scripture and prayer this week?

RESPOND

BUILD A DAILY RHYTHM

A daily rhythm with Jesus does not need to be complicated. Do not begin by creating an impressive plan you cannot sustain. Begin with a simple plan that helps you consistently meet with God in His Word and prayer.

TIME

Choose a realistic time when you can consistently give God your focused attention. The goal is not a particular hour of the day; the goal is intentional, consistent time with Him.

PLACE

Choose a place where you can focus and limit distractions. Put away what will pull your attention away from God.

PLAN

Decide what you will read and how you will pray. Use OIA as you read Scripture and ACTS as you pray. A plan removes the question, “What am I supposed to do?” when you sit down.

Not sure where to start? Start with the Gospel of John. Read one small section each day. Don't worry about finishing a certain number of chapters. Read slowly, use OIA, and focus on understanding what God is saying and how you should respond.

Design Your Daily Abiding Rhythm

My time_____

My place_____

My plan_____

When life is disrupted_____

Don't try harder. Stay closer

Show up. Slow down. Stay. Trust Jesus to produce what you cannot manufacture.

> **A simple plan you consistently practice is better than an impressive plan you rarely follow.**

What is the clearest next step God is calling you to take in your daily relationship with Jesus?

PRAY

Take Time to Respond to God

Before your group closes, take a few quiet moments with God. Ask Him to deepen your desire for His Word and prayer. Confess anything that has consistently crowded Him out. Thank Him that, because of Jesus, you can come to the Father. Ask Him to help you abide in Christ this week—not simply during a quiet time, but throughout your day.

What would you like your group to pray with you about as you build this rhythm?

FOLLOW THIS WEEK

Following Jesus continues after the gathering. Put your TIME + PLACE + PLAN into practice this week.

READ

Read John 15:1–11 slowly. Use OIA: Observation, Interpretation, Application.

REMEMBER	Memorize John 15:5.
PRAY	Use ACTS—Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication—as a guide for prayer.
PRACTICE	Follow the TIME + PLACE + PLAN you wrote above. Keep it simple and consistent.
ENCOURAGE	Check in with someone from your group and encourage one another in your time with Jesus.

> **Spending time with Jesus isn't about checking a box. It's about knowing a Person.**

Memory Verse

John 15:5 — "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

My Notes