



Week 8

YOU ARE CARRIED

A New Thing

Most of us are wary of new things. Familiarity is comfortable and predictable, whereas change brings the unknown – and the unknown is scary, strange, uncomfortable, and unpredictable. But surrendering to Jesus as Lord doesn't leave much room for things to stay the same since He's committed to changing our hearts, lives, and also the whole world. In this episode the disciples were introduced to radical change! Nothing remained the same...they went from living in houses to living in tents...they left their families and their jobs...they went from being completely independent, to being totally dependent on Jesus. So much change would have been debilitating and unbelievably scary...Except for the fact that it wasn't, because of the presence of Jesus in the change!

What new thing are you afraid Jesus might lead you to? (Missionary work, sharing your faith in your school, ending a toxic relationship, changing schools, getting off of social media, feel free to name more than one).

Off - Reading

“And He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. And He said to them, ‘Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics (coats). And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.’ And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.” Luke 9:1-6

The New Testament followers of Jesus were on the ground floor of the best new thing, but it required them to look forward, to literally move forward, and by doing so, to put their faith into action. Faith that Jesus could be trusted when He gave very specific instructions. Faith that God would indeed provide for their needs as they served Him. Faith that He would continue to teach and grow them spiritually, enabling them to do more than they’d ever thought possible. Faith the God would carry them. There was no other way to make it work. If they wanted to go with Jesus, they had to leave their old way of doing things behind.

Mary Magdalene was a single woman with a traumatic personal history. But she followed Jesus from town to town, trading the familiarity of home for the unknown alongside her Savior – which meant she trusted Jesus not only for her physical well-being, but also for her ongoing sanctification. And over time she became less like her former self and more like the One she was following.

Nicodemus didn’t get to experience the “walking around with Jesus” part – but that doesn’t mean that he never trusted Him as Lord. Oh, what a relief it would’ve been for our beloved Pharisee, so concerned with adhering to the law and being “good”, to fall into the strong arms of his Redeemer. To be carried by the only One capable of true goodness, of restoring desperate hearts, and of leading God’s chosen to the promise land.

Matthew must have experienced a moment of pause when Jesus gave very specific, very terrifying marching orders. The disciples were sent into the countryside to do what they’d seen Him do, without food or shelter. They were instructed to go with nothing but the shirts on their backs. Boiled down, the plan was “take nothing because you’ll be provided for in your moment of need”. For a guy like Matthew who had once loved the security of money more than people, it was no doubt a testing of his faith.

Simon self-sufficiency would’ve made being carried a foreign, maybe even unattractive, concept. Plenty of times throughout the New Testament, we see him attempt to follow the

Messiah in his own strength – only to fumble and fail – but Jesus persisted because learning to depend on Him was wholly necessary if Simon was going to participate in kingdom building.

The early disciples knew better than anyone that the power given to them was from Jesus. Apart from Him, they could do nothing, because Jesus made the way.

1. **The Disciples were asked to travel though out the region, telling people about Jesus with no provisions of their own. What would your response to Jesus be if He asked you to do the same thing?**
2. **What kinds of things do you think Nicodemus missed out on by not following Jesus when the others did? Like him, in what ways are you trying to do life under your own strength and in your own way?**
3. **Read Isaiah 46:3-4. God explicitly told His chosen people that would carry them all the days of their lives. Knowing about His past miracles and hearing His vow to remain with His chosen people, how should these verses inspire you moving forward?**

Jesus Is Our Way-maker

Jesus doesn't ask us to make our own way. He asks us to allow Him to lead, equip, and provide. Yet it often still feels like so much is required of us – because, in truth, so much is. Like His early followers, we have to put our faith in Jesus and follow Him with our whole hearts, which can be hard since it means giving up our own plans and goals, along with all the predictability and familiarity they offer. But also like His early followers, on our own we can do nothing. Correction. What we can do is surrender and follow where Jesus leads.

“For consider you calling, brothers (and sisters): not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But god chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chows shat is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom form God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord’.” 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

1. **Make a list of anything you can't currently get through, how can Jesus help you get through it? How can your YTH LIFE Group help you in these circumstances?**
2. **Read Hebrews 12:1-3. Explain what it means for Jesus to be the ‘founder and perfecter’ of your faith.**

3. What tangible thing might be calling you to say or do in order to put your faith into action?

Prayer Focus

Thank God for His promise to keep and carry His chosen people (YOU). **Ask** Jesus, the found and perfecter of your faith, to continue changing you from the inside out, making you more like Him every day. **Ask** for opportunities to do hard things in His name and in His power – the same power that change the lives of the disciples forever. **Praise** Him for allowing you to be a part of building His Kingdom, just like those who've gone before you.