

Foundations - Follow Jesus - Discipleship

Intro: We have reached the study that gives us our identity, purpose, and mission all in one. We've covered many different topics that are at the core of what we believe, the foundations of our faith.

1. We established that God's word is the authority in our lives, a standard for us that is outside of ourselves. Jesus prayed; "sanctify them in your truth, your word is truth". And so God's word is everything.
2. We learned about our God and His great love for us. His name is love, his character, from the first stories in Genesis and all throughout the Bible we see the great love of God. We see it ultimately displayed in the Life of Jesus and his death on the cross for our sins - Romans 5:8 "God demonstrates his love for us in this, while we were still powerless Jesus died on the cross"
3. We learned about ourselves and our sinful nature. (The Fall We also learned the good news and the fact that Jesus is the son of God, that he is the one who has come to take away our sins, who died on a cross and was resurrected. (Acts 2:22-24)
4. We learned that in responding to the good news we repent and are baptized and that it is in the waters of baptism that we receive the forgiveness of our sins in faith and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38-39; Eph 2:9-10)
5. We also learned about the church, the body of Christ and that when we are baptized besides being forgiven our sins and receive the gift of life, we are also placed in the family of God, his very household, the body of Christ. It is here that we experience the fullness of the love and Grace of God as we connect with one another and also share the goodness of God with the world around us.

So finally we come to a point where we decide, answer the call to follow Jesus as His disciples.

Matthew 28:18-20

- We've been given a mission. God's desire is to fill his house. To be able to have all his creation experience and be a part of His great Love
- As His disciple we take on this mission to make more disciples

1. Follow me

- **Mark 1:16-18**

- Come follow me - Jesus called them to be his disciples. In the old world to be someone's disciple meant more than just learning from them but it was also imitating them and it included a relationship.
- Disciple can be defined as a pupil or learner, apprentice (common in eastern practice)
- Fishers of Men - He called his men and would teach them to call others. (Make disciples) (be fruitful and multiply)
- We are to have the same purpose as Jesus.

If Jesus calls his followers disciples, where do we get the name Christian?

- **Acts 11:25-26**

- The Disciples were called Christians - The people of Antioch decided to give the followers of Jesus a name, they called them "Christians" or "Christ's Disciples"
- This study will define what it means to be a disciple
- In the Bible, being a Christian and a Disciple are the same thing. Jesus called his followers disciples, he did not use the term "Christian".

How many times does the Bible use the word Christian? 3; Disciple? Over 270

We are devoted to following Jesus and imitating him. In what ways are we called to be like him?

2. Called To Love

- **Matthew 22:35-38** - Called to Love God

- Which is the greatest commandment - We work at this and everything else will follow
- Love the Lord with all your being - As disciples we make loving God a priority and do it with our minds, our bodies, spiritually and with our emotions.
- How can we love God in these ways? What would it look like?
 - Loving God is expressed in our obedience - "If you love me you will obey my commands" **John 14:15**

- **Matthew 22:39-40**

- He teaches us to also love others.

- **John 13:34-35** - Called to Love Others
 - That is the standard of being a disciple: to love like Jesus loved; it is His command of us.
 - What does it mean that all men will know that you are a disciple by your love?
 - The love of a disciple will set them apart from the rest of the world
 - How can you grow in your love to be more like Jesus?
 - Your love for Jesus and others is one of the things that defines you as a disciple/Christian

3. Called to Deny Ourselves

- **Luke 9:23-26** - Called to Carry a Cross
 - If anyone - The call is for everyone. (1 Timothy 2:3-4)
 - Deny themselves - Disciples live a life of self-denial.
 - What does it mean to deny yourself daily?
 - Deny your sinful temptations every day
- Putting the need of others 1st - **Phil 2:3-7**
 - **What kinds of things do you need to deny yourself of? (share personal temptations as well)**
 - Take up their cross - Life as a disciple is challenging, but worth it!
 - Follow me - Imitating Jesus is how we live his disciples.
 - Give up life to gain it - It does not make sense, but when we give up our lives for Him he gives us eternal life.
 - Don't be ashamed - By living like Jesus we will be different from the world and can be tempted to be ashamed. There is nothing to be ashamed of when your living right!
 - What does it mean to be ashamed of Jesus? To be afraid to share about him or acknowledge yourself as His follower.
 - Called to deny ourselves means to put Jesus 1st - above everyone else
- **Luke 14:25-27** - Called to Put Him First
 - If anyone comes to me and does not hate - Jesus uses this strong language to demonstrate that he comes before everything in our lives including family, friends, careers, and personal ambition. If you want to be His disciple, Jesus is 1st.
- **Matthew 10:37-39**
 - What is Jesus talking about when he says to hate those people or you can't be a disciple?
 - Your love for Jesus must be so great that it seems like hate for others in comparison

- **Luke 14:28-30** - Called to Count the Cost
 - Sit down and really think this through - The tower is our relationship with God. We need to soberly think through the cost to following Jesus.
 - It is for life if you want life.
 - Think of it like a marathon not a sprint.
 - This is not an emotional decision - Emotions are powerful and can motivate but we need Faith in order to be saved.
- **Luke 14:31-33** - Called to Surrender
 - Two Kings about to go to war - We are the king of our lives and Jesus is the other King.
 - What is your answer for eternal life? Jesus holds all the keys.
 - Ask for terms of peace - We are in no position to bargain with God.
 - Jesus is coming and you cannot win. We know we will lose if we go to battle so we ask for terms of peace

What would you need to give up in order to be a disciple of Jesus?

4. Counting the Cost

We have taught you all you need to know,

You can be baptized

Are you ready to commit yourself to God and his household, to believe in the one he sent and to follow His son Jesus

Ephesians 5 Paul talks about our relationship with God like a marriage (EPH 5:32) in Exodus 19:5-8 we see a wedding like ceremony as God pledges himself to the people and calls them to pledge back to him, and the people respond with "I will"

I like to look at Colossians 3 and walk through it like a wedding vow

- **Colossians 3:1-4**
 - Vows we make to God - His love demonstrated on the cross - Hope given at the resurrection -
 - This is what we call people to do, we must be doing it

Do you Vow to - (Read the passage as vows)

5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:[b] sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 *On account of these the wrath of God is coming.*[c] 7 *In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.* 8 *But now you must put them all away:* (Do you vow to put away) anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 (Do you promise) not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self[d] with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Do you (vow) promise to:

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Do you promise to

14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Do you promise to 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

And so do you promise that 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

If you are ready and willing to make Jesus Lord than there remains only two questions:

Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he lived a sinless life, died for you on a cross, was resurrected not he third day and is now seated at the right hand of God?

What is your good confession? (Romans 10:9)