

The Journey of Discipleship – Grow

Our most recent sermon series has really highlighted the importance of sharing our highs and lows with those we are in community with. I have been so encouraged by the way people have shared their stories with our GWAC community and want to encourage you to do the same.

SHARE

1. Take the time to go around and share how you have grown in your discipleship this year? Was there a particular moment or situation that you felt stretched in?
2. We have all experienced those 'lightbulb' moments with God (that's why you're here today right?). How would you describe those moments and what do you usually do with them?
3. Spiritual disciplines/practices concern both community and individual life and they can be both inward and outward experiences. Share with your community:
 - a. what disciplines have helped you grow?
 - b. what about that practice was helpful for you?
 - c. what disciplines have you wrestled with? Is there a practice that you struggle with? Why?
 - d. has there been a discipline that has stretched you (for the better)?

READ

Matthew 16:13-28 (Mark 8:27-33 and Luke 9:18-27 record the same interaction).

Peter also has a few pivotal moments in the gospels have a quick read over them to get a great picture of his journey.

Luke 5: 1-11, Matthew 14:26-36, Luke 22:54-62, John 21:15-17.

DISCUSS

There are several questions listed, you might like to read through and pick which ones will be more helpful for your community.

1. Jesus asked His disciples, "But who do you say that I am?" (verse 15). What is your answer to the question, "Who do you personally say Jesus is?"
2. This is the first time Jesus uses the word "church" (ekklesia) (verse 18). What does it mean? What do we learn about the church from this passage?
3. Peter hears what Jesus response is and physically pull Jesus aside to rebuke him. Why does this interaction take place? And what do you notice about Jesus' response back to Peter?
4. Peter's ongoing struggles as a follower of Jesus does not cancel his identity in Christ. The same is true for us. Our journey may have a series of ups and downs yet our identity in Christ remains. How do you hold on to this truth?

5. Think through the three things that Jesus said were to be done if a person were to come after Him (verse 24). What are those three things and what do they mean?
5. What does it mean to take up one's cross? What are some of the crosses that we as his followers must take up? (verse 24)
6. The person who wants to save his life must lose it. The person who loses his life for Jesus' sake will find it. How do you resolve this paradox? Why does Jesus ask these questions? (verse 25)
7. As a group you might like to discuss the different marks or signs of being a disciple listed in the gospels? How might you grow in these?

REFLECT

The two questions posed by the sermon are general enough to help us apply them in every context. From your discussion today,

a. What is God saying to you?

b. How are you going to respond?

When we think of responding to something God has put on our hearts and minds the tendency is to speak broadly. Let me encourage you to dig a little deeper.

You might even consider putting it into a SMART goal.

Be **SPECIFIC** in how you want to respond

Make it **MEASURABLE** so you can see your personal growth

Aim for something **ATTAINABLE**, you can always stretch yourself as you grow

Think about how **RELEVANT** it is to what God spoke to you about

Put a **TIME** on it, this will help you hold yourself accountable and consider sharing this action step with someone close to you.

PRAYER

Share with your community the things God has been speaking to you about. You might like to even share how you will respond to what that is. A community is a great space for you to be able to hold one another accountable as your together, walk this discipleship journey.

Pray for one another, and remember to check in with those goals and plans you put in place.

As we finish, some of you may sense God speaking to you about something from today. Let me encourage you to have courage and step into it. Feel God moving your heart and mind and continue to declare that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. You know that you need to be changed by Jesus. Come to Him today!