

A-Z of Discipleship Course

WEEK 2 - ROOTED DISCIPLESHIP

This week we'll look at some important topics which will help followers of Jesus put down strong discipleship roots.

Preparation

Before you meet, read chapters C, D, E, F and G of *A-Z of Discipleship*.

Begin (10 mins)

Ensure that everyone is welcomed and encourage them to keep pursuing the adventure of discipleship. You might like to ask how what they have discovered about discipleship since the last meeting, and what they have found helpful or difficult as they've read the Bible.

The leader should then read Mark 1:16-20 and remind everyone that being disciples is, in the end, about laying down our agenda, and following Jesus. Then pray for everybody, that the Spirit of Jesus would continue to be our teacher as we learn about discipleship.

Discussion (50 mins - ie. about 10 minutes on each)

1. C is for Church

No-one is called to be a disciple in isolation. Instead we're meant to grow as disciples together in the family of God's church. So what is 'church' according to the New Testament? Look at Bible verses such as 1 Corinthians 3:9 and Ephesians 2:19-22 to help. Are you part of a local church? If not, why not? Acts 2:42-47 describes an inspiring model of church, so how could you help make your church more like this first church?

2. D is for Disciplines

To grow in discipleship requires training. God has provided some key disciplines to help us mature. Three of these are listed in Matthew 6. Look at vv2, 5 and 16 to see what they are. Talk about them. Does Jesus say they are optional extras, or part of discipleship? In *A-Z of Discipleship*, Matthew especially focusses on fasting, as it's a basic but much neglected discipline, but don't neglect others too, like daily Bible reading and prayer. Practicing these disciplines doesn't make God love us any more (he can't love us any more or less!), but they do please him because he knows they are good for us. Read 2 Timothy 1:7 to see what the Bible says about the link between the Holy Spirit and disciplines.

3. E is for Encourage

How often should disciples encourage others, according to 1 Thessalonians 5:11? Why do you think encouragement is so important for disciples? Read Acts 11:22-24 and take note of how Barnabas encouraged others. What was the result? Think of someone you can encourage today.

4. F is for Faith

Faith is not a concept or a 'thing' - rather it is believing in someone or something. Followers of Jesus put their faith in Jesus. According to Jesus in Matthew 17:20, how much faith do we need for God to move in power? On p.36 of *A-Z of Discipleship*, Matthew says: 'What's most important is not that we have great faith but faith in a great God.' Talk about this, and about the importance of exercising faith.

5. G is for Giving

God is a generous God, freely giving good things. What does John 3:16 say is the most significant thing God has given? If God is generous, so should disciples be. So what hinders generosity? Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 to see how God honours generosity. What happens as we give?

Pray (10 mins)

End this session by asking everyone to choose at least one thing they want to do differently, in the light of today's material. Then go round and briefly share these things, for encouragement and accountability. Now turn to prayer, and encourage group members to pray for each other, asking that the Holy Spirit would help everyone put these things into practice.

Close by thanking God for everyone in the group, person by person. Encourage each one, if possible, with a word of Scripture or a short prophetic word, as they leave.