

A-Z of Discipleship Course

WEEK 3 - CORE DISCIPLESHIP

In this session we will look at five topics that are central to being a disciple.

Preparation

Before you meet, read chapters H, I, J, K and L of *A-Z of Discipleship*.

Begin (10 mins)

Ensure that everyone is welcomed. Give just a few minutes to one or two questions or reflections people have had, as they've journeyed in discipleship since the last session.

After this read 2 Timothy 1:7 (looked at last time), giving thanks to the Holy Spirit gives us power, love and self-control. As we look further at some core aspects of discipleship in this session, pray for his help and guidance as we seek to go further in discipleship.

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

1. *H is for Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit is 'God's empowering presence.' He is God - real and true and at work. Read some Bible verses about Him: eg. Acts 1:4-5; Acts 2:1-4; John 16:7-11. What do you discover? He grows fruit in our lives (see Galatians 5:22-23) and loves to give us gifts that we need for a variety of situations (see 1 Corinthians 12:7-11). Do you want to be immersed in his Holy Spirit (either for the first time, or again)? If so, ask in prayer - either now, or at the end of this session.

2. *I is for Identity*

One thing the Holy Spirit loves to do, when we begin following Jesus, is tells us who we now are: that we are no longer separated from God, but included in his family (see Colossians 1:21-22). What do 1 Peter 2:9 and Ephesians 2:10 say about our identity? How does it felt be his beloved children, adopted into his royal family, knowing God is pleased with us? Even when we sin, or times are hard, God still loves us and wants us to grow and get stronger, like children. The Bible says (in 2 Corinthians 5:17) that we are 'new creations.' Praise God!

3. *J is for Jesus*

Jesus is central to discipleship: he is amazing, and we follow him! He shows us what God is like, and His life, death, resurrection, and ascension are at the heart of the Christian faith. Ask everyone to share one thing they have discovered about Jesus recently. Look at some of the names of Jesus listed at the top of p. 60 of *A-Z of Discipleship*, and if time some of the Bible verse linked to them. Which ones stand out and why?

4. *K is for Kingdom*

Followers of Jesus are part of God's kingdom. We come under his kingship and seek to live by kingdom values. This kingdom will be fully experienced in heaven, beyond the grave (Revelation 21:3-4). Until then, Jesus told his followers to pray and work for God's kingdom to come here on earth, as in heaven (Matthew 6:10). Talk about this and its implications. Jesus loved to tell short stories (parables) to help us grasp what God's kingdom is like. Ask one or two in the group to say if there is a kingdom-parable they have found particularly enlightening.

5. *L is for Love*

God is full of love, and the perfect example of love is found in the person of Jesus. Read 1 John 4:9-11 and talk about how God shows this love to us in Jesus. What happens when we find it hard to love people? (Hint: the Spirit of Jesus has lots of love to give - see Galatians 5:22 and 2 Timothy 1:7 - so why not ask?)

Pray (10 mins)

End in prayer. Begin by thanking God for Jesus, and that our identity as disciples is based not on how good we are, but on how good he is. Spend some time praying for each other - for a fresh immersion in the Holy Spirit for each one, and that his love would flow in and from us, bringing his kingdom into all sorts of situations in the coming days.