

Discipleship: Lesson #1 - Knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord

- Two common titles/names for Jesus in the New Testament are 'Savior' and 'Lord.' What do those two titles/names mean?

- For Jesus to be our Savior, it means that he saves us from our sins, through what he did in his life, death, and resurrection. For Jesus to be our Lord is to recognize that he has complete authority to direct our lives however he sees fit.

- If someone were to ask you how they could become a Christian, what would you say?

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

- Verses 1-3 tell us about sin and how we all lived in it.

- What does it mean to be dead in sin?

- Why did we follow the wrong ways of the world, the devil (he is the "ruler of the kingdom of the air"), and our own flesh (or: sinful nature)?

- What does it mean to be "objects/children of wrath"? Did we deserve punishment?

- From v.4, why do you think God loved people who were dead in sin and following wrong ways?

- From v.5, how did God make us alive with Christ? What do the cross and the resurrection have to do with this?

- From v.8, what does it mean to be saved by grace through faith?

- What does it mean that this is "not from yourselves" but that it is "the gift of God"?

- From v.10, how should we understand the good works God has prepared for us? If we are not saved by them, as we see in v.9, how should we understand the role of good works in our lives?

- Since we all have sinned and deserved to be separated from God, what is our solution? We are to believe in Jesus as Savior and Lord! Here are some verses on how we can come to believe in and receive him:

John 1:12: Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 10:9: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

- What stands out to you about these verses?

Have you, by faith, received Jesus as your Savior and Lord?

If not, here is a prayer you could pray: Dear God, thank you for your love for me. I recognize that I have sinned against you. Thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I now pray to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Please forgive me for all of my sins. I give my life to you. Please fill me with the Holy Spirit and help me to follow Jesus. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

If you have already received Jesus as your Savior and Lord, how did that happen? Tell your story.

If you've received Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you should keep walking with Jesus.

Colossians 2:6 says, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him." In Luke 6:46, Jesus said, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"

- What does it look like for you to keep walking with Jesus and to do what he says?

- Are there any areas of your life in which you struggle to give control to God? If Jesus is Lord of your life, how should you handle those struggles?

Discipleship: Lesson #2 - Worship

Recap: In lesson #1, we talked about knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord. We are to receive Jesus and keep walking with him. Colossians 2:6 says, “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him.”

*For those who walk with Jesus, we are supposed to worship God. Why is that?

- What comes into your mind when you hear the word “worship”? What caricatures or misconceptions might you be carrying around with you in regard to the idea of worship?
 - Is it more than just the songs we sing? What else might be considered as worship?
- How would you define the word “worship”?

Read Romans 12:1-2

- From v.1, why should worship be connected to God’s mercy?
 - What does the phrase “living sacrifices” mean? How can we offer ourselves to God like this?
 - Why should we care about being “holy and pleasing to God”?
 - From v.2, what does it mean not to “conform any longer to the pattern of this world”?
 - Remember, from our previous lesson, that we used to follow the ways of this world (Eph. 2:2).
 - What does it mean to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”?
 - Who does the work of transformation? What is God’s part? What is our part?
 - How are our minds renewed?
 - What does knowing God’s will have to do with worship?
 - According to these two verses, how much of our life should be taken up with worship?
- Application:** What does it mean to worship God in daily life?

What is the goal of worship?

Below are some answers, but not a complete list. Are there others you would add?

- To glorify God - Read Romans 15:6
 - Why is it important to glorify God?
- To become more like the Lord in our character - Read 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - What does it mean to “reflect” or “contemplate” the Lord’s glory?
 - How does God shape our hearts as we worship him?
- To enter into God’s presence - Read Hebrews 10:19-23
 - What has God done for us to allow us to be near to him?
 - From v.22, what does it mean to “draw near” to God?
- To encourage others to worship - Read Hebrews 10:24-25
 - How can we help, encourage, and remind each other to worship?
- To receive guidance - Read Psalm 43:3-4
 - How does God guide us as we worship him?

Read Mark 7:6-7

- Why would people honor God with their lips, yet still have hearts that are far from God?
- Do you ever find yourself just “going through the motions” in your worship of God?

Conclusion:

- What are some steps you can take to increase your worship of God?
- How does worshipping God help you continue to walk with Jesus?

Discipleship: Lesson #3 - Prayer

- What is prayer? Why should we pray? What kinds of answers should we expect in prayer?
- What does prayer look like for you on a daily basis? What do you think the daily prayers of Jesus looked like?

Read Matthew 6:5-15

- What do we learn from vv.5-6 about what prayer should and shouldn't be? What value is there in this kind of 'secret' prayer life?
 - Note: 'hypocrites' are people who pretend to be something/someone they are not.
 - Note: It can be very good to pray with other people. Jesus did that. But we are warned here not to do so for the wrong reasons.
- What do we learn from vv.7-8 about what prayer should and shouldn't be?
 - If God doesn't hear us just because we use "many words," what kind of prayers will God hear?
 - Note: Sometimes our prayers can be really short, if we pray by faith. Other times, it might be good to spend a lot of time in prayer, like Jesus often did.
 - If God already knows what we need, why should we pray?
- From v.9, why do you think Jesus taught his followers how to pray?

We can look at the Lord's Prayer in two parts. The first part teaches us to want what God wants.

- From v.9, what does it mean for God's name to be "hallowed"?
 - A footnote in the ESV translation of the Bible says, "Let your name be treated with reverence."
- What are we asking when we pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"?
 - Think back to our discussion of what it means to know Jesus as Lord. What does it mean for us to seek what God wants instead of simply what we want?
 - Read Luke 22:42, where the 'cup' refers to the upcoming death of Jesus. What did it mean for Jesus to pray, "Yet not my will, but yours be done"?
- As you compare this part of the Lord's Prayer to the prayers you have prayed over the past week, do you think your prayers have been more focused on what you want or on what God wants?

The second part of the Lord's Prayer teaches us that we depend on God for our physical & spiritual needs.

- From v.11, what does it mean to ask God to give us our daily bread?
- What does v.12 teach us about forgiveness?
 - Look at vv.14-15. Why won't God forgive us if we won't forgive others?
- What does v.13 teach us about temptation and evil and how we should pray about them?
- What is the point of praying according to this pattern that Jesus gave us?

Some other passages on prayer:

- Read 1 John 5:14-15. What does it mean to pray according to God's will? How does this kind of prayer give us confidence?
- Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. What does it mean to "pray continually"? What is the role of rejoicing and giving thanks in prayer?
- Read Philippians 4:6-7. What does it mean to pray "in everything"? How does prayer help us deal with anxiety and give us peace?

Conclusion: How would you define prayer? What is the point of prayer?

- What would be better: if God changed your circumstances to what you want them to be, or if he reshaped your heart to make it what he wants it to be?

Application: Name one or two things that could help improve your prayer life right now.

Discipleship: Lesson #4 - God's Word

- What is the purpose of reading the Bible?
 - To meet with God? To learn? To grow in holiness? To worship God?
- What is your current practice in reading the Bible? What are some road blocks?
- Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. It uses several synonyms for God's word. Almost every verse mentions something about Scripture.

Read Psalm 119:9-16

- From vv.9-11, how does God's word help us stay away from sin?
 - Many people view God's word as restrictive. Psalm 119 has a much different take. From vv.12-14, why can we rejoice in God's word?
 - From v.15, what does it mean to meditate on God's word?
 - From v.16, how can we learn to delight in God's word?
 - This section uses phrases like "living according to your word," "hidden/stored up/treasured your word in my heart," and "I will not neglect/forget your word." What would it look like for you to view God's word this way?
- In Matthew 4:1, it says that "Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." Jesus was tempted in three different ways. Each time, Jesus quoted God's word in his response.

Read Matthew 4:3-4 (This is the first of the three temptations)

- What does it tell you that Jesus used Scripture to combat temptation from the devil?
 - How can we follow this pattern in our battle against temptation?
 - Why do you think Jesus compared God's word to food in v.4? What does it mean to live on it?
 - Following this analogy, in what ways should we consume God's word?
- In John 17, Jesus prayed for his disciples and then for all who would believe in him through the message of his disciples. In v.17 of that chapter, Jesus prayed for sanctification (the process of being made holy).

Read John 17:17

- What did Jesus mean when he said that God's word is truth?
 - How does God sanctify us (make us holy) through his word?
- The psalmist said God's word is eternal and it stands firm (Psalm 119:89). Jesus said, "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35) and that God's word is truth (John 17:17). Paul said, "All Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16). Do you agree that God's word is completely true and trustworthy?

If you committed to meeting with God regularly in his word, what do you think would happen?

- What would you like your daily practice of Bible reading to look like?
- Do you have a plan for reading through the Bible? Do you think a plan would be helpful?
 - Note: Please remember that reading the Bible is not merely about getting through a certain number of verses or chapters each day. It's important to listen to God and apply his word to your daily life. Your Bible reading time is meant to be an act of worship in which you grow in holiness, in your faith, and in your relationship with God.
- Connecting today's lesson with our previous lessons:
 - What is the connection between reading the Bible and following Jesus as Lord?
 - How can reading the Bible be an act of worship?
 - How can we combine our Bible reading with prayer?

Discipleship: Lesson #5 - Fellowship

- In our relationship with God, we are commanded both to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30) and to “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31).
 - Why do you think it’s important both to love God and others?
- When a person receives Jesus as Savior and Lord, they are not only welcomed into a relationship with God, but also into a relationship with other believers. The Bible calls this the body of Christ.
 - Why do you think God wants believers to live in fellowship with each other?
- Hebrews 10:19-25 explains how we are invited into fellowship with God. From there, it guides us in our fellowship with each other.

Read Hebrews 10:19-25

- What does it mean to enter the Most Holy Place (v.19) and to draw near to God (v.22)?
 - What does it mean to enter “by the blood of Jesus”?
 - Why do you think God wants us to be near to himself?
 - Are you drawing near to God?
 - What might prevent you from drawing near to God?
 - How do you like to meet with God?
 - How does God like to meet with you?
- Because we are invited to draw near to God, we are commanded to help each other with this.
- From v.24, what does it mean to consider how we may spur one another on?
 - Note: the word for “spur/stimulate/stir up” often has a negative sense, as in being irritated, like two people poking each other with something sharp in an argument. But here, it has the positive sense of getting something to move in the right direction.
 - Has anyone ever spurred you on in a way that felt uncomfortable, but later you recognized the value in it?
 - How should we do this for each other?
 - How can we learn to listen when someone else does this for us?
- From v.24, specifically, we are called to spur each other on to “love and good deeds.” Why are love and good deeds so important in our walk with God?
- From v.25, we’re told not to give up meeting together.
 - Why is it important for Christians to meet together? How does this kind of fellowship help us grow in our faith?
- From v.25, we see that some people have fallen into the bad habit of not meeting together. What are some reasons that Christians stop meeting together?
 - Are there any of these bad habits that you need to get out of?
- In v.25, we’re told to encourage one another. We’re supposed to give and receive encouragement.
 - How have you received encouragement from other believers?
 - How do you think you can give encouragement to other believers?
- In v.25, we’re reminded that the Day is coming, the Day when Jesus will return. How should that Day affect the way we live now?

Application:

- How do you think your life could be improved by being in fellowship with other believers?
- What are some steps you can take to grow in your fellowship with other believers?

Discipleship: Lesson #6 - Evangelism (Sharing the Gospel)

- What comes to your mind when you hear the word “evangelism”?
- What are some of your fears in regard to evangelism? Do you feel adequate to share the gospel?
- Who told you the gospel? How did they do it?

Read Colossians 4:2-6

- Verse 2 is a command to pray. What role does prayer play in evangelism?
 - Who are you praying for?
- What does it mean to be “watchful and thankful” in evangelistic prayer?
- Why should we pray for open doors?
 - What does an open door look like? How will we know if a door is open?
- From v.4, what does it mean to proclaim the gospel clearly? What would a clear presentation of the gospel include?
 - Tip: How can you help someone understand that Jesus is both Savior and Lord?
 - What does it mean to call someone to repentance?
 - What words would you use to encourage someone to receive Jesus?
- From v.5, what does it mean to be wise in the way you act toward outsiders and to make the most of every opportunity?
- From v.6, what does it mean to have gracious, salty words?

Read Matthew 28:16-20

- The main command in this passage is “make disciples” from v.19. What does that mean? Why might it make sense that disciples are to make more disciples?
- What do going, baptizing, and teaching have to do with making disciples?
- Note: Jesus has all authority (v.18) and promised to be with his disciples always (v.20). These two truths should help us realize that we can join with God in the work of evangelism.
- How does someone come to Jesus? Here are some essentials:
 - In John 6:44, Jesus said, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.”
 - How does this verse help us understand God’s role in evangelism?
 - Romans 10:17 says, “Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”
 - How should you use God’s word in evangelism?
 - Romans 10:9 says, “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
 - How should we talk about Jesus as Lord, as well as the resurrection, in evangelism?
- Practically speaking, how can we do evangelism?
 - Prayer: Who can you share the gospel with? Make a prayer list. Look for opportunities.
 - Test the waters; knock on the door. What are some questions you can ask to see if a door is open?
 - What is a realistic way you think you could proclaim the gospel to others?
 - Is there someone you could invite to go to church with you?
- Luke 15:7 tells us that there is rejoicing in heaven when a sinner repents. In evangelism, we get to participate in something that brings joy to heaven!

Discipleship: Lesson #7 - Service

- Describe a time in your life when someone served you. How did it make you feel?
- Acts 20:35 says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Why is that?
- What's the connection between serving God and serving others?
- Jesus set the example of service. He came as a servant (Phil. 2:7). He said he "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45).

- In 1 Peter 4:7-11, we're first given some instructions about how to live in light of the fact that the end of all things is near. From there, it goes into some teaching about how to serve.

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

- From v.7, what does it mean that the end of all things is near? Why is this important in light of the topic of service?
- From vv.7-8, how do prayer and love fit into this topic of service?
- From v.9, hospitality is mentioned as a way to serve, but we're commanded to do so without grumbling. Why is grumbling a temptation as we serve?
- From v.10, what does the word "gift" mean?
 - What does it mean both to receive and use a gift?
 - Other passages that list spiritual gifts are Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 7:7-11; Eph. 4:11-13
 - What spiritual gifts do you think you might have?
 - How can you discover what gifts you have?
 - Note: Encourage each other to use your gifts. If God gave it to you, use it!
- Verse 11 mentions the categories of speaking and serving. How does serving in these ways reveal God's grace to others?
- From the end of v.11, what is the goal of our service?
- Sometimes, you may be called upon to use your spiritual gifts to serve others - this passage mentions gifts. Other times, you may be called upon to serve in an area where you're less gifted, or even weak - we're all called to love and to offer hospitality in this passage. You can also serve others by using your time, possessions, or money. This is all to the glory of God!

Read Matthew 5:13-16

- What does the salt analogy tell us about how we should interact with people?
 - What does the light analogy tell us about how we should interact with people?
 - Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). We are to be light in this world, too.
 - From v.16, what is the purpose of doing good deeds?
 - What is the connection between service and evangelism?
- What happens if we don't serve? Who misses out?

Serving inside the church:

- How can you use your time, talents, and treasure so that the body of Christ might be built up?
- How much should a person serve in the church?

Serving outside the church:

- What ways might you look to serve those around you?
- How might this help you share the gospel with them?
 - Remember Colossians 4:2 - pray and watch! As you serve, look for open doors for the gospel.

Discipleship: Lesson #8 - Humility, Repentance, Pursuing Righteousness

Humility

- 1 Peter 5:5b says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
 - Define the words 'humble' and 'proud.'
 - Why is there this sharp contrast between the way God treats the proud and the humble?
 - What would it be like to have God oppose you?
 - How do proud people treat sin? How do humble people treat sin?
 - What is the link between being humble and knowing Jesus as Lord?

Two topics related to humility: repentance and pursuing righteousness

1) Repentance

Read Mark 1:15 and Acts 2:38

- What does the word 'repent' mean?
- Why is repentance an appropriate response when someone first hears the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- As we continue to walk with Jesus, how important is repentance?

Read 1 John 1:5-10

- From vv.5-7, describe the contrast between light and darkness.
 - What offer is being given to us here?
- In verses 6, 8, and 10, we read about deception. What does this tell us about why we sin?
 - In John 3:19, it says "men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil."
 - What does this teach us about why we sin?
 - Why might we think our sins are not a big deal?
- From v.9, what does it mean to confess our sins?
 - What does God do for us when we confess our sins?
- How often should we repent of our sins?

2) Pursuing Righteousness

Read 2 Timothy 2:22

- What do the words "Flee" and "pursue" imply in this verse?
- How does it help to do this along with others who call on the Lord out of a pure heart?
- Here are some other helpful verses on these topics:
 - Ephesians 4:22-24 on the contrast between the old and the new.
 - Psalm 139:23-24 on asking God to show us what is wrong and to lead us into what is right.
 - Psalm 25:9 on how God guides the humble into what is right.
- In repentance:
 - Confess your sins (admit you have done wrong) and ask for cleansing.
 - Ask for strength to turn from sin and to do what is right.
 - Consider asking a trusted leader, brother, or sister in Christ to help you.
 - According to James 5:16, you can confess your sins to them and they can pray for you. They can also help keep you accountable, moving forward.
- Are there any sins you want to confess right now?
- How does our humility, or lack of humility, reveal who we are following?

Discipleship: Lesson #9 - The Holy Spirit

- What did you grow up believing about the Holy Spirit?
- How important is the Holy Spirit for our daily walk with Jesus?

Read Galatians 5:16-26

- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- What is the flesh (also called “the sinful nature”)?
- Verse 17 uses, in various translations, words like: contrary, conflict, against, opposed. Describe this conflict between the Holy Spirit and the flesh.
 - Is it possible to follow both the Holy Spirit and the flesh?
- What action words does this passage use in regard to us following the Holy Spirit?
 - How do we “live” (or: “walk”) by the Holy Spirit? (v.16)
 - What does it mean to be “led by the Spirit”? (v.18)
 - How can we “keep in step with the Spirit”? (v.25)
 - There is another action word for following the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5:18. Read that verse. How do we obey the command to “be filled with the Spirit”?
 - Who fills us? How are we filled? What’s our part?
 - Why do you think being filled with the Spirit is contrasted with drunkenness in this verse?
 - How often should we pray to be filled with the Spirit?
- How can we know if we’re being influenced by the sinful nature?
 - What does the word “desires” in Galatians 5:16 teach us about our struggle with sin?
 - Which of the things listed in vv.19-21 do you struggle with?
 - If you notice some of these sins in your life, what should you do?
- From vv.22-23, what does it mean that these nine things are “fruit of the Spirit”?
 - Which of the fruit of the Spirit come more easily for you? Which are lacking?
 - What can you do if you see a fruit of the Spirit lacking in your life?
- From v.24, what does it mean that “Those who belong to Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires”?

Application:

- What happens if we try to live the Christian life in our own power, or if we try to guide ourselves?
- Practically speaking, what does it look like to follow the Holy Spirit’s lead on a daily basis?
- How is following the Holy Spirit connected to other lessons in this series, like reading the Bible and praying?
- In John 16:8, one of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to “convict the world of guilt in regard to sin.” How can we listen to the Holy Spirit pointing out sin in our lives? How does this connect with our previous lessons on repentance and following Jesus as Lord?

Discipleship: Lesson #10 - The Church

- It can be easy to come up with reasons not to be actively involved in a church. What are some reasons God might want you to be actively involved?

Read Matthew 16:18

- What does this verse teach us about how Jesus views the church? (Whose idea is it? Who is building it? How much success will it have?)
- What is the church?
 - What is the worldwide church? Who belongs to it?
 - What, then, is a local church?

Read 1 Peter 2:4-10

- This passage doesn't use the word "church," but what in this passage shows us that Peter is talking about the church?
 - What does the phrase "spiritual house" mean?
- What is the significance of the phrase "chosen and precious cornerstone" (v.6)?
 - If Jesus is chosen and precious to God, why is he rejected by some?
- What is meant by the picture of Jesus as the "living Stone" (v.4) and us as "living stones" (v.5)?
- What is important about us being called a "holy priesthood" (v.5) and a "royal priesthood" (v.9)?
- What does it mean to offer "spiritual sacrifices" (v.5)?
 - What kind of spiritual sacrifices can you offer?
- What does it mean to "declare the praises of him who called you" (v.9)?
 - What does it mean to declare God's praises:
 - To God?
 - To other believers?
 - To the lost?
- This passage speaks of God's plan to build something with Jesus at the prominent place and those who believe in Jesus built into it, with the expectation that we would serve and worship.

Application:

- What advice would you give someone regarding how they can get plugged into a local church?
- What excuses have you given for not being actively involved in church? How can you change your mind about those excuses?
- What is one thing you can do better to live out your role in the local church?
 - Are you a spectator or a participant in your church?
- How can you help other people see the benefit of being part of God's church?
 - What would you say to someone who says they believe in Jesus, but they don't see the value in being part of a local church?

Recap of Discipleship Series:

- What is a disciple?
 - What are one or two things that have stood out to you about what a disciple should be?
- What does it mean to make disciples?
 - What is a next step for you in making disciples?