

# Discussion Guide

January 14, 2024

## Sermon Synopsis

Many people in our American culture, and certainly within the Church, refer to themselves as Christians. While this can be a wonderful thing when it is an accurate claim, it is interesting to note that Jesus Himself never called His followers “Christians.” Instead, He called those who followed Him “disciples.” Throughout this sermon and the series that follows we discover what it means to truly be a devoted follower of Jesus. We hope that you will listen to the message today to examine where you stand in your relationship with Christ and pray that God uses this series to draw you closer and make you more like Jesus.

## Items for Discussion

What is “discipleship” in the Christian context and why does it matter?

### Group Question #1

“Even you can be a disciple...” It is very easy for us to read a narrative, such as those regarding Jesus calling those who would form His inner-most circle, and quickly gloss over important details and implications. Who were these men? What was it about Peter, Andrew, James and John, and the others that commended them to Jesus? Certainly it wasn't wealth, intellect, or any other sort of human prowess. For these were working men, common men, basic men if we borrow from the modern vernacular. We may even say they were “undesirable” men. Men whom the world, along with its metrics of value, would utterly pass over. Yet, it was they to whom Jesus first said “Follow me”. How should this impact the way a disciple, today, should view themselves? How should such an understanding influence us as we seek to evangelize and make more disciples as we follow Jesus from day to day?

### Group Question #2

“Salvation always produces transformation...” Sanctification is a big theological word that means “to be set apart”. The big idea of sanctification in Christianity is the idea of being “made more and more like Jesus”. Every genuinely saved person is in the life-long process of being “sanctified” and conformed to the image of Christ. Jesus told Peter, Andrew, James, and John that He would “make” them “fishers of men” indicating that He was intent on transforming and sanctifying who they were into what He desired them to be. Every single authentic Christian is in this process of being transformed to be more like Christ AND to be “fishers of men”, themselves. Read John 17 as a group and focus upon verse 17. According to Jesus in this, His High Priestly Prayer, how can His disciples, today, lean into and make progress in sanctification? By what means does this occur? In light of Christ's prayer, read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and discuss the importance of the Word of God in relation to the transformation that every Christian desires to see fulfilled in their lives.

### Group Question #3

“It's better together...” In the journey of salvation and discipleship, it's not a choice between being solely individualistic or entirely communal. Scripture emphasizes the vital role of both the individual and the community of faith, the local Church. They are interdependent, and both are essential for disciples to mature and become more like Jesus.

Read Hebrews 10:19-28 as a group, paying special attention to verses 24 and 25, which highlight the communal aspect of Christian discipleship. In these verses, discuss the various roles the community plays in the growth and development of each individual disciple.

## Matthew 4:12-22

### One Liner of the Week

“We cannot be a disciple of Jesus without a community through which to follow Him.”

### Food for the Soul

M: John 1:14-28

T: Matthew 3:1-12

W: John 1:29-34

T: John 1:35-51

F: Matthew 4:1-11

S: Matthew 4:12-25