

1 DNA 1 Following Jesus (Vision)

What does following mean? It's Jesus' invitation into

1) Relationship

2) Obedience

3) Sacrifice

4) Service

1.1 Relationship

Matthew 4.18

Follow me - not doing but being - doing flow out of being in a relationship - first thing is come and be with him, be in relationship with him. Learn from Jesus by looking and sharing His life - up close and personal - His life open for imitation - not about following rules its about walking with him

Remember the first time we did that - how could I not be all in ? Pursuit of knowing him more - come follow me is an invitation to get up close and personal

For Paul nothing in the world compares to knowing Jesus.

Question 1 - is that true for me - do I count knowing Jesus as more treasured than anything else?

Question 2 – What distracts me from living this out?

1.2 Obedience

John 10.3-4 sheep hear my voice - how well do you know the voice of Jesus - he is the shepherd calling out to the sheep - respond to his voice recognise, listen and obey. Children know their parents voice and they obey - how do we hear the voice - scripture and the prompting of the Holy Spirit - imitating his life

Apprentice, learner or disciple - learning the craft of the master - attentive to the instruction of the teacher. Students emulate the teacher - like in a workshop where you were learning carpentry you watch, listen and then copy.

Called not just to listen but imitate - imitate his way of life - we know how much we are listening by seeing the ways we are changing into His likeness

We change when we expose ourselves to the word.

Question 3 – In what ways can we be changed through obedience?

Question 4 – How do we hear the shepherds voice?

1.3 Sacrifice

Mathew 16.24

If anyone would come after me ...

Brands exist for everything - companies spend a long time developing their brand - Jesus setting up a new revolutionary movement - come up with an image or symbol what would you choose – sword, pillow ? Jesus image He chooses, His brand, this is the symbol of the essence of the message - He chose the cross as the symbol that best describes what it means to follow him - deny ourselves and take up His cross and follow Him. Don't go our own way but go his way. What does the cross represent? He doesn't hide the sacrifice in the small print - he is very clear. Why do we have a struggle about this - are we willing to lay down our life and follow Jesus via the cross - why would we do that? What we gain is so much greater than what we lose- temporary stuff we lose nothing compared with eternity with Jesus.

What we gain in Christ is s much greater than what we lose- He picked up his cross - we emulate this - we need to recognise this part of following Jesus.

Question 5 – What does it mean to pick up our cross and deny ourselves?

Question 6 – Why would we do this?

1.4 Service

John 12:26 - **Anyone serves me He must follow me** - Father will honour him - follow him into service - into his purpose - we join the family business - we live for his cause. Not our cause - what is his cause? - Ephesians 2:10 this is the cause -we are His workmanship purposed for good works that have been prepared for us - we are his workmanship - for good works- God has a purpose for us - things for us to do -

Overarching purpose and good work - has for us - to share with others what we have received – invitation. Like a wedding invite - wanting people to share the good of the event. God entrusts the invitation with us - to join His great banquet and wedding feast - we hold these invitations- what we do with them depends upon how excited we are to follow Jesus - is our joy in the gospel greater than our fears about sharing?

There is a world out there that needs that invitation – people are left outside of the party because we have not invited them. Massive responsibility we must steward faithfully - we must see break through here. What does it mean for us as a church to follow Jesus - we can't say we have a relationship if we are not obedient to the great commission? Parables of wedding feast - at moment doors are open but one day they will be shut - we have a limited time to invite.

One day the doors will be shut - want to be a people to take this responsibility seriously. Not up to us how people respond - it is to give the invite

Question 7 -Who is it that God wants you to invite - who would you be sad to find they are not at the party?

Question 8 -Which of these areas (Relationship, Obedience, Sacrifice, Service) do you need to grow in?

Question 9 - Which of these areas are you doing well in ?

Please pray your will be freshly encouraged not condemned