



Gospel Community Notes & Questions

Title: The Pattern of Following Jesus

Text: Matthew 11:28-30

Theme: Following Jesus is a lifelong, communal journey of living in the reality of your new, received identity.

Teaching Notes: Many Christians today don't realize that Jesus' discipleship model was based upon the rabbinic model of ancient Israel. This makes it very different than sitting in a modern classroom, learning a subject matter from a math, science, or history teacher. There was this element of learning information, but it was much more about becoming like your teacher and being recognized by your imitation of your teacher. Ultimately, apprenticeship was about replicating the way of your teacher -- which, in the case of Jesus, means teaching his Gospel and life to others.

Outline:

1. Association: "be with me."

- a. Cultivate your awareness that he is present.
- b. Consciously turn your attention to him.
- c. Spend time in conversation with him.
- d. Go where he's going.

2. Education: "learn from me."

- a. Get in the Word of God consistently and thoughtfully.
- b. Get in community where you talk about the Word.

3. Imitation: "become like me."

- a. Cultivate your awareness that he is present.

4. Replication: "teach others about me."

- a. Teach the central message of Jesus, the Gospel.
- b. Teach the way of Jesus and help others follow him.



Questions to explore individually and with your group:

1. What are some ways the rabbinic model of teaching differs from how you've been taught in the past?
2. How do you consciously spend time with Jesus on a day-to-day basis? How does the challenge of "but he's not physically here" impact your efforts of being present with him?
3. Practice: Take a well-known, short passage like Psalm 23. Instead of reading in order to read, or reading in order to find something to do, read this Psalm simply to be aware of – and to enjoy – God presence. What do you notice?
4. Jesus invited anyone and everyone, "Learn from me." What do you think he wanted us to learn?
5. What is the #1, irreplaceable way of learning from Jesus today? What are your current practices around this means of learning from Jesus?
6. Read Luke 6:40 and 1 John 2:5-6. Summarize. How could you tell if you were actually abiding in Jesus?
7. What are some possible reasons why "replication" isn't a part of the modern, Western way of understanding discipleship to Jesus? Why do we focus so much on personal/individual practices almost to the exclusion of sharing the way of Jesus with others and consciously making disciples?
8. Where do you find yourself in this pattern? What are your strengths and weaknesses? What have you skipped? Where are you stuck?
9. Reflecting on your own spiritual formation, what's something you see differently now through the lens of the rabbinic model of discipleship?
10. What's one practical, specific thing you'll do with the message this week?