

G3 Curriculum: Introduction

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study

So far this year, we've studied the book of Jude (*Bible*) and the gospel of Jesus Christ (*Belief*). Although we've tried to emphasize how Scripture and doctrine are thoroughly practical, we turn now to our final unit of the year, which is in the *Behavior* division of our curriculum. For this unit, we'll make use of a simple discipleship tool called G3 (I'll explain the name soon). Pastor Ryan has used it to disciple men in our church. We want to consider the possibility of commending it as a tool for everyone in our church to use to disciple others. And, I want to start that process by asking you to use this tool to teach your students the most basic (yet profound) tenets of following Jesus.

It is eminently possible—especially for relatively well-educated folks like us—to overcomplicate the Christian life. Discipleship is quite simple according to our savior: “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40). Discipleship is a recurring process of (1) acknowledging Jesus as your teacher and your station as a student; (2) hearing your teacher's instruction; and (3) doing what your teacher says. The purpose? To become “like” our teacher—or, as the apostle Paul puts it, “to be conformed to the image of [God's] Son” (Rom 8:29). How glorious is that?

G3 is a disciple-making tool that helps us listen to our teacher, Jesus. In my opinion, it is sufficiently simple to be helpful to the newest believer. And, since it simply takes cues from Jesus, it is sufficiently profound to occupy the greatest saints for a lifetime. Below, you'll find the contents of the tool and a few tips for you—the disciple-makers.

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Give Out

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Matthew 4:19: *And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

Tips for Disciple-Makers

1. *The distinctives are interconnected.* Although such questions aren't written into the curriculum, regularly ask your students to reflect on how the "distinctive" you're discussing (e.g., *obey*), is related to the distinctives you've already discussed (e.g., *surrender*).
2. *Challenge the students to tether their responses to the Scriptures.* G3 is intended to be conversational. Hence there are no answers provided to the discussion questions in the curriculum. The conversational format enables G3 to adapt to the maturity levels of the disciple-maker and the disciple, but it can have the unintended effect of relativizing the answers to the discussion questions. You and your students will get the most out of these exercises if you resist the urge to speculate and instead search the word of God.
3. *The tool should be adaptable to different ages and levels of spiritual maturity.* As I've already noted, new believers and mature saints alike should be able to profit from this tool. For your students who feel as if they are above such "simple" instruction, challenge them to get below the surface.
4. *Choose your method of delivery.* G3 is usually used in 1-on-1 discipleship settings. It can certainly benefit a large group, but you might consider splitting your group among your co-leaders and individually taking two or three students through the whole curriculum.
5. *Emphasize multiplication.* G3 is intended to be a simple-enough tool that one who is discipled can use the tool to disciple someone else once he or she has finished. Challenge your students (and yourselves) to disciple others in our church using this tool.

Please pray with me that God would bless your teaching of this unit. Pray especially that God would cause our students to be more conscious of their daily, moment-by-moment walk with Jesus so that they would be more careful and more zealous to honor him in everything.

Give Up: Surrender (Distinctive 1)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | February 28, 2024

Surrender: Followers of Jesus deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. *And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me"* (Luke 9:23).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

1. What's your general definition of the word "surrender"?
2. Is there a difference between how you define "surrender" and how Jesus defines it?

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" (Luke 9:23–25)

Jesus gives us three characteristics of a disciple and a definition of a surrendered life. First, one must deny himself. Second, one must take up his cross daily. Third, one must follow Jesus.

3. What does it mean to deny yourself?
4. Why does Jesus command us to take up our crosses daily?
5. What are the things that hinder you or distract you from denying yourself and taking up your cross daily?
6. How does the concept of "surrendering" apply to placing your faith in Christ for salvation?
7. How does the concept of "surrendering" apply to daily following Jesus?

Let's look at a practical example from Christ.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:57–62)

8. Is there a limit to your surrendering to God? Do you try to negotiate terms for following Jesus? What are some steps you need to take to have an attitude of total surrender?
9. Normally, when we talk about surrendering, we think about giving up or losing something. Rather than focusing on what we give up, what are some of the benefits of surrendering to Jesus?

10. Can you think of a time when you surrendered to Christ? What was the result?

Surrendering to the Lord begins at the moment of first belief and then continues daily for the rest of the believer's earthly life. Learning how to surrender gives you the capacity to move on and make progress in the next distinctive. As you follow Jesus, you will find that surrendering is necessary to live out all the other G3 distinctives.

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

11. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?

12. **Heart:** Have you totally surrendered your life to Christ?

13. **Hands:** Are you surrendering to Christ in the context of your relationships with your parents, siblings, friends, and family?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they've seen and heard in God's word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *surrender* to Christ's lordship in every area of life.
- Ask God to expose your failures to surrender all to Christ.
- Pray that God would give you joy in surrendering to Christ, despite the loss that might occur.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God's help in your life? How do your friends need God's help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: Luke 9:23

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight's verse(s) and recite those they've learned previously.

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

Give Up: Sacrifice (Distinctive 2)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | March 6, 2024

Sacrifice: Followers of Jesus renounce all they have to follow him. *So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple* (Luke 14:33).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

1. As you read Luke 14:33, how do you think sacrifice is connected to surrendering?
2. How would you define "sacrifice"?

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:28-33)

3. What does it mean to "count the cost" in relation to the commitment to follow Jesus?
4. What percent of one's possessions is Jesus telling His disciples they must renounce?
5. What is your initial reaction to this command?

Let's take a moment to consider.

What is Jesus actually telling His disciples to do in this imperative? Is the expectation for every believer to sell all of his or her possessions? Why would Paul ask for the collection of an offering in 1 Corinthians 16:2 if the expectation was to give away all possessions? "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come."

While Jesus did command the Rich Young Ruler to sell everything in Matthew 19:21, Mark 10:21, and Luke 18:22, "selling everything" is not a universal command. For example, look at 1 Timothy 5:8: "But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Here is a command to provide for our families, which would be impossible if we gave away all our possessions. Instead, renouncing all possessions is really about recognizing that all we have—whether material things, talents, or any other resource—belongs to God and that we should use all we are and all we have to fulfill His mission to love people and make disciples.

6. How can you better renounce your possessions—and all you have—and use them to fulfill Christ’s mission?
7. What makes this command so difficult? What hinders you from living sacrificially?

Let’s look at a practical example from Christ.

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Matthew 13:44-46)

8. Think about the exchange that happens when we live sacrificially for Jesus. What do you gain?
9. What do you lose?
10. If we have truly and completely surrendered to Jesus, how should that affect our sacrifice? (Think back to the previous lesson.)
11. How should the command to sacrifice affect our generosity with our time, talents, and treasures?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

12. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
13. **Heart:** What do you need to sacrifice for God?
14. **Hands:** How can you use your spiritual gifts and earthly possessions to serve others and make disciples?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they’ve seen and heard in God’s word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *sacrifice* all you have in service of Christ.
- Ask God to expose what you refuse to sacrifice for him.
- Pray that God would show you the joy of renouncing all to follow Jesus.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God’s help in your life? How do your friends need God’s help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: Luke 14:33

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight’s verse(s) and recite those they’ve learned previously.

“So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.”

Give Up: Listen (Distinctive 3)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | March 20, 2024

Listen: Followers of Jesus listen to his voice. *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me* (John 10:27).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

1. What are some characteristics of a good listener?

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:24-27)

2. This passage speaks of a personal relationship between Jesus and his followers. How does the health of the relationship affect our ability to listen?
3. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who never loses any sheep. How does this security in your relationship with Christ affect your listening?
4. While Jesus can speak to us in an audible voice, Jesus more commonly speaks to us through other methods. What is the primary way he speaks to us today? What other ways can he speak to us?

Let's take a moment to consider.

In ancient Jerusalem, shepherds would enter the city through the Sheep Gate. Because it would be unwise to lead a flock of sheep through a busy city, there was a pen outside the city where shepherds could keep their flock while they went into Jerusalem. Rather than each shepherd getting an individual pen, all the sheep were kept together in one large, common pen. When the shepherd was finished with his business, he would come to the gate of the pen and call his sheep. Amid many different flocks, only the sheep of the calling shepherd would come. The sheep recognized the voice of their shepherd. They spent so much time with him and had such a deep personal connection that they were able to ignore the calls from strangers.

5. How does proper surrendering and sacrificing affect our listening?
6. What perspectives and attitudes are necessary for you to listen well?
7. What are some of the distractions that can hinder listening?

Let's look at a practical example from Christ.

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. (Matthew 7:24–27)

8. What is the primary difference between the two people in this parable?
9. What is at stake on whether we choose to listen to Jesus or ignore his voice?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

10. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
11. **Heart:** What is hindering you from fully listening to Jesus?
12. **Hands:** What are some practical steps you can take to listen carefully?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they've seen and heard in God's word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *listen* to Christ's words and teaching.
- Ask God to expose your failures to listen to Christ's commands.
- Pray that God would cause you to delight in listening to the law of Christ (Ps 1).
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God's help in your life? How do your friends need God's help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: John 10:27

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight's verse(s) and recite those they've learned previously.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

Give In: Abide (Distinctive 4)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | April 3, 2024

Abide: Followers of Jesus abide in his word. *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples"* (John 8:31).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

The Greek word for "abide" (μένω, menó) occurs 109 times in the Bible and is often translated as "abide," "continue," "stay," or "remain." "Abide" is the Greek word used to describe the Holy Spirit descending and remaining on Jesus at His baptism (John 1:32); to describe staying in a home (Luke 10:7); to describe the difference between a son and a servant (John 8:35); to describe how the Father dwelt in Jesus (John 14:10); and how He abides in us (1 John 4:13-16).

1. What is the difference between casually reading the Bible and abiding in it?

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)

2. What does Jesus mean when he uses the word "if"?
3. Is abiding in his word optional? If a person's life is never marked by abiding in the words of Jesus, what could that indicate?
4. What do you think it would look like for a person to abide in the word?

Let's take a moment to consider.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. (John 15:1-11)

Here, Jesus teaches that abiding is a conditional requirement by using the word “if.” Jesus explains that there is a necessary connection between loving God and obeying God. The goal of Christianity is not to make yourself better, but to be made more like Jesus by the power of his Spirit to the glory of God.

5. What do you think is the difference between trying to make yourself a better person and abiding in the teachings of Jesus?
6. Why is abiding so essential to being a disciple?

Let’s look at a practical example from Christ.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. (John 15:4–6)

7. According to the passage above, how essential is abiding in Christ for a disciple?
8. What does this passage teach about a life that is not abiding in Jesus?
9. How does abiding in Christ and his word make a difference in your life?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

10. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
11. **Heart:** Is there any unconfessed sin hindering your abiding?
12. **Hands:** What are some practical steps you can take to abide in his word?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they’ve seen and heard in God’s word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *abide* in Christ, the true vine.
- Ask God to help you see your inability to do any spiritual good outside of the vine (John 15:5) and to increase your dependence on him.
- Pray that God would give you fullness of joy as you abide in Christ.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God’s help in your life? How do your friends need God’s help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: John 8:31

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight’s verse(s) and recite those they’ve learned previously.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.”

Give In: Obey (Distinctive 5)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | April 17, 2024

Obey: Followers of Jesus obey him. *And he said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything, he rose and followed him* (Luke 5:27b-28).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

The call to follow Jesus requires a response. Walking with Jesus involves a decision, but obedience to Jesus is not optional. Anyone can become a disciple, but all disciples must obey Jesus.

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me." (John 14:21-24)

1. How is loving God connected to obeying God?
2. What does Jesus mean when he says, "Whoever does not love me does not keep my words"?
3. Jesus tells Judas that he will manifest himself by dwelling with those who love and obey him. What is the connection between our obedience and the Father and Son dwelling in us by the Spirit?

Let's take a moment to consider.

Obedience is a crossroads in the G3 journey. *Surrender, Sacrifice, Listen, and Abide* all culminate in the act of obeying God's commands. Then, obedience drives us to walk in the *Light, Love, Serve, Share, and Multiply*. Obedience is non-negotiable (*Surrender*), costly (*Sacrifice*), intentional (*Listen*), and founded in God's word (*Abide*).

Obedience pleases God. While we are commanded to obey God, our obedience originates not in our effort, but in God's grace, and it comes to us as a gift from him. God "works in us that which is pleasing in his sight" "through Jesus Christ" (Heb 13:21). He "he works in [us], both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:13). The "fruit of righteousness" "comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil 1:11). Even so, we "work out our salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12), and our love ought to "abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment" (Phil 1:10).

Furthermore, if we are in Christ, God's law comes to us not as the instrument by which we are judged but as an expression of his love and care. His commands teach us how to love as He loves. His commands communicate what he is like: "be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36); "as

he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct” (1 Pet 1:15); “[forgive] one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph 4:32).

4. Are there any specific commands in the Bible that you struggle with?
5. What steps do you need to take to have a different attitude toward obedience?
6. What does obedience to Jesus look like in a broken world?

Let’s look at a practical example from Christ.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” And Jesus said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:57-62)

7. What level of obedience does Jesus expect from his disciples?
8. Some will look at this passage and think that Jesus is being unreasonable. What gives Jesus the right to demand such a high level of obedience?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

9. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
10. **Heart:** What is your current attitude towards obeying God?
11. **Hands:** What are some practical steps you can take to obey his word?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they’ve seen and heard in God’s word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *obey* Christ in all things.
- Ask God to expose your failures to obey. Ask him to convict you of sin and give you repentance.
- Pray that God would show you the joy that comes through obeying Christ.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God’s help in your life? How do your friends need God’s help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: Luke 5:27b-28

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight’s verse(s) and recite those they’ve learned previously.

And he said to him, “Follow me.” And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

Give In: Light (Distinctive 6)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | April 24, 2024

Light: Followers of Jesus walk in the light. *Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).*

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

Though "walking in the light" is one of the more abstract distinctives of G3, recognizing that Jesus is the light and craving his presence is one of the most necessary components of being a disciple.

Have you ever been in total darkness? How does that feel? Imagine a life that is devoid of any light: no warmth for comfort, no sight for direction, and no energy for growth. Throughout the four Gospels, Jesus is calling men and women to step out of the darkness and to thrive in his light.

1. Has there been a time in your life marked by walking in darkness? What is that like?
2. How does following Jesus compare to walking in darkness?

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

And Jesus cried out and said, "Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness." (John 12:44-46)

3. What does Jesus mean when he says, "I have come into the world as light"?
4. What role does our belief play in whether we walk in darkness or light?

Let's take a moment to consider.

Jesus is the light, and without him, we would be in total darkness. While this might be the most abstract distinctive in G3, it is also one of the simplest. Imagine being a child walking a path on a dark night beside your dad who has a lantern. As your dad progresses, the darkness is always pushed back, and, as long as you walk beside him, you are safe and in the light. The issue arises when we lose focus on the light and become distracted by the darkness. Maybe we get excited and run ahead, or we get distracted and fall behind. If we are not intentional about walking beside the light, we will soon find ourselves in darkness. The Gospel of John explains walking in the light in 8:12; our job is not to defeat the darkness but to walk closely beside the one with the light.

5. Why are we tempted to run ahead of the light? Why are we tempted to fall behind?
6. The light of Jesus is constant; if we find ourselves walking in darkness, then we have wandered away from him. When we find ourselves not following Christ, what should we do?

7. How will Jesus respond when we repent from our sin?

Let's look at a practical example from Christ.

“No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light.” (Luke 11:33-36)

8. In John 8:12, Jesus said His followers would have the “light of life.” Based on the above passage, what do you think Jesus expects us to do with the light we have?
9. How does abiding and obeying factor into your walking in the light?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

10. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
11. **Heart:** What is hindering you from walking in the light?
12. **Hands:** What are some ways you can share the light of Christ with others?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they've seen and heard in God's word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *walk in Christ's light* and not swerve into darkness.
- Ask God to show you how you are walking in the darkness currently.
- Pray that God would cause you to delight in walking in the light with Christ.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God's help in your life? How do your friends need God's help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: John 8:12

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight's verse(s) and recite those they've learned previously.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Give Out: Love (Distinctive 7)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | May 8, 2024

Love: Followers of Jesus love one another. *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another* (John 13:35).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:34–35)

1. How is this new commandment different from “love your neighbor as yourself”?
2. What words would you use to describe Jesus' love for us?
3. Why is love such a defining characteristic of a disciple of Jesus?

Let's take a moment to consider.

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Paul uses fifteen characteristics to describe love: “patient,” “kind,” “does not envy,” “does not boast,” “is not arrogant,” “is not rude,” “does not insist on its own way,” “is not irritable,” “is not resentful,” “does not rejoice at wrongdoing,” “rejoices with the truth,” “bears all things,” “believes all things, hopes all things,” and “endures all things.” First Corinthians 13 sets God's standard for loving well. The standard is high, and the target audience is wide. God calls us to love both neighbors and enemies because our love is not based on the worthiness of the recipient, but on the worthiness of our Lord. Jesus loved us when we were unlovable and calls us to love others in the same way.

4. Why is it difficult to love others?
5. What needs to change about your perspective to help you love others?

Let's look at a practical example from Christ.

And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” (Matthew 9:35-38)

6. How does compassion play a role in how we love others?
7. What is the connection between compassion, caring for others' needs, and sharing the gospel?

8. Why does Jesus command the disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers instead of just commanding them to go do it all themselves?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

9. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
10. **Heart:** Is there anything in your heart that is hindering you from loving others?
11. **Hands:** What are some practical ways you can show love to others this week?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they've seen and heard in God's word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *love* others as Christ has loved you.
- Ask God to expose your failures to love others as Christ has loved you.
- Pray that God would stir your affections to love your brothers and sisters, your neighbors, and your enemies.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God's help in your life? How do your friends need God's help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: John 13:35

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight's verse(s) and recite those they've learned previously.

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Give Out: Serve (Distinctive 8)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | May 15, 2024

Serve: Followers of Jesus are servants of him. *If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him* (John 12:26).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

1. Here is another command of Jesus that is attached to the condition "if." What is the significance of Jesus' use of "if?"
2. The servant follows Jesus. Where do you think Jesus would go if he were here? Where, then, must you go? How must you serve?

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:25-28)

3. What is the difference between Jesus' idea of greatness versus the world's idea?
4. How does the example of Jesus being a servant affect your willingness to serve others?

Let's take a moment to consider.

Regardless of position or power, we all must serve others. The CEO of the largest company has to answer to investors and to the company's customer base. The highest-ranking military office still serves under the authority of the President. We all, in one way or another, serve others on a daily basis. Jesus is not commanding us to serve broadly, but to serve in a specific way: his way.

Our service is not rooted in the person we are serving; our service is rooted in the person of Jesus Christ. The first kind of service can be selfish and originates in our own desires: "I would do anything for [insert name here] because I know they would do the same for me." This is a form of a "quid pro quo," or, in other words, "I will scratch your back if you will scratch mine." On the contrary, Jesus calls believers to serve others not because we receive payment or earthly reward, but because our service is a reflection of Christ's character in us. Our reward for serving is not the favor or kind words we may receive, but rather the honor that God will show us in the end.

5. What are some worldly reasons why people serve each other?
6. What should motivate the disciple of Jesus to serve others?

Let's look at a practical example from Christ.

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Then the righteous will answer him, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?" And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:31-40)

7. Should we serve others in order to earn salvation, or should we serve others because we are saved?
8. What is the difference and why does it matter?
9. Knowing that our service to the least of these is really service to God, how should this affect our lives?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

10. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
11. **Heart:** What is your motivation (or lack thereof) to serve others?
12. **Hands:** What are some practical ways you can serve others this week?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they've seen and heard in God's word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *serve* Christ by serving others.
- Ask God to expose your unwillingness to serve others; your pride; your selfishness.
- Pray that God would show you the joy of serving others as Christ has served us.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God's help in your life? How do your friends need God's help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: John 12:26

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight's verse(s) and recite those they've learned previously.

"If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him."

Give Out: Share (Distinctive 9)

G3 Curriculum | Wednesday Bible Study | May 22, 2024

Share: Followers of Jesus are fishers of men. *And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"* (Matthew 4:19).

Discussion

Lead your students in conversation on this week's theme using the following questions.

1. What are your initial thoughts when it comes to sharing your faith?
2. What are some of your fears or concerns about sharing the gospel with others?

Let's look at what Christ said in the gospels.

While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. (Matthew 4:18–22)

Here, Jesus gives us the definition of a disciple: a disciple is a *follower of Jesus* who is *being transformed by Jesus to make disciples for Jesus*. As believers, we are called to make disciples. The first step for a disciple to make a disciple is simply sharing the gospel. Often we over-complicate evangelism and find it intimidating. Think of evangelism as simply one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.

3. Does sharing the gospel feel more like a joyful privilege or a burdensome obligation? Why?
4. If one of your friends asked you "How can I become a Christian?" what would you say?

Let's take a moment to consider.

In evangelism, we must remember our place as witnesses for Christ compared to the Holy Spirit's role of changing hearts. First, the Spirit convicts a lost person of sin and draws the person to saving faith in Jesus (John 16:7-11, John 15:26-27). Disciples are to be a witness for Jesus. A witness is not responsible for convincing someone of the truth; instead, witnesses can only testify to what they know. Often, believers think that it is their responsibility to convince someone to believe in Jesus or that they have to say just the right thing in order for a person to believe. In reality, all believers can do is love others as Christ loves and share Jesus with them; an individual's salvation ultimately depends on God's grace to them.

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he

has heard from us?” So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. (Romans 10:14-17)

5. If the word “preach” means share the gospel rather than deliver a sermon in Romans 10, what does the passage above teach about sharing the gospel?
6. According to verse 17, what is the power of evangelism?

Let’s look at a practical example from Christ.

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.” (Matthew 22:1-10)

7. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach through this parable?
8. According to this parable, who should you be sharing the gospel with?

Look at and pray about what you have discovered.

9. **Head:** What is God saying to you today?
10. **Heart:** What is holding you back from sharing the gospel more?
11. **Hands:** Who is someone that you know that needs to hear the gospel?

Prayer

As you bring your discussion to a close, ask the students to pray in response to what they’ve seen and heard in God’s word tonight. Some suggested material for prayer is below.

- Ask God for the grace to *share* Christ with non-believers. Pray for boldness, clarity, opportunity, and the fear of God rather than of men.
- Ask God to give you a greater sense of urgency for evangelism.
- Pray that God would cause you to delight in sharing Christ with others, no matter the cost.
- *Share personal prayer requests with one another.* **Some ideas:** What sins are you fighting? How do you want to grow in Christ? How else do you need God’s help in your life? How do your friends need God’s help? Which non-believers are you praying for?

Memorize: Matthew 4:19

Finally, you can challenge your students to memorize tonight's verse(s) and recite those they've learned previously.

And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."