

THE WAY Sermon Series

FAQ's & More Info

Why did you choose the title *The Way* for a teaching series on discipleship?

We chose this title for our sermon series on discipleship because early followers of Jesus were known as people of the Way. They were known for the way they lived their lives in obedience to the teachings of Jesus.

“But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.”
Acts 9:1-2 (ESV)

What does it mean to live as a disciple of Jesus?

Living as a disciple of Jesus is learning to live in God's kingdom and under Jesus' reign.

“From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”

“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.’” Matthew 4:17-19 (ESV)

What are a disciple's goals?

The goal of discipleship to Jesus is to intentionally learn to live in His way and with His heart.

We do that by focusing on three areas: **being with** Jesus, **becoming like** Jesus, and **doing as** Jesus does.

“And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.’” Matthew 4:19

- “Follow Me” = Being with Jesus (upward trajectory)
- “I will make you” = Becoming like Jesus (inward trajectory)
- “Fishers of men” = Doing as Jesus (outward trajectory)

When it comes to being a disciple of Jesus, He is the curriculum (John 14:6) and the Spirit and the Scriptures are the guide.

“The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heartbreaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as ‘Christians’ will become disciples - students, apprentices, practitioners - of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from Him how to live the life of the Kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence.” Dallas Willard

What does it mean to “be with Jesus”?

It means, on the one hand, that you intentionally cultivate an awareness of God's presence in your life, and on the other hand, that you focus your efforts on being present with Jesus.

“But as for me, the nearness of God is my good;” Psalm 73:28 (NASB 1995)

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13 (ESV)

How do we learn to acknowledge the ever-present presence of God?

First, it's helpful to realize that seeing God in the world changes the world you see. Second as we read through the Scriptures one of the constant affirmations it makes is the nearness of God. Third, it is true that, in addition to being near, God also desires to be with His people (See Genesis 3:9; Exodus 25:8; Psalm 139:7-10; Revelation 21:3). Fourth, remember that the ever-present God is also the pursuing God.

If God is ever-present, what can we do so as to not miss His presence?

1. Don't let religion, which inverts the story, get in the way. You don't have to do anything to be made right with God except believe in Jesus (John 3:16).
2. Understand that how you believe the world was created will color your expectation of finding God in it. When you believe that God created the world, you're better positioned to assume that God is here.
3. Don't let the circumstances of life crowd God out.
4. Understand that there are times when God seems hidden.

"The question we're then faced with is not whether we've been good enough, jumped high enough, or sought hard enough...The question is, do we want to be found?" Joshua Ryan Butler

Resource: [The Pursuing God](#) (sermon), by Pastor Ryan Paulson
[The Pursuing God](#) (book), by Joshua Ryan Butler

How do we pursue God?

1. We recognize that this is a mutual pursuit: God first pursuing us, and us responding with pursuit of our own.
2. We let the truth that Jesus wants us before He wants anything from us drive our pursuit of Him. (Mark 3:13-15)
3. We continue to learn how to make our home in God. (John 15:1-11)
4. We pray as we are, not as we think we should be.
5. We invest time, money, resources in the relationship.

"Everything is made to center upon the initial act of 'accepting' Christ (a term, incidentally, which is not found in the Bible) and we are not thereafter expected to crave any further revelation of God to our spirit. We have been snared in the coils of a false logic which insists that if we have found Him, we need no more seek Him." A.W. Tozer

"O God, I have tasted Thy goodness, and it has both satisfied me and made me thirsty for more. I am painfully conscious of my need for further grace. I am ashamed of my lack of desire. O God, the Triune God, I want to want Thee; I long to be filled with longing; I thirst to be made more thirsty still. Show me Thy glory, I pray Thee, so that I may know The indeed. Begin in mercy a new work of love within me. Say to my soul, 'Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away.' Then give me grace to rise and follow Thee up from this misty lowland where I have wandered so long. In Jesus' name. Amen." A.W. Tozer

Resource: [The Pursuit of God](#) (sermon), by Pastor Josh Rose

[The Pursuit of God](#) (book), by A.W. Tozer

What does it mean to “become like Jesus”?

Because Jesus is the most whole human to ever live, and because wholeness/maturity/completeness is His goal for us, it only makes sense that He is calling us to become like He is. As such, God’s ultimate goal is that we would be transformed by the Spirit so as to possess the same character qualities/traits/attributes as Jesus does.

While the first goal of discipleship has to do with us pursuing and living in the presence of God, the second has to do with what happens in us as we do that. As we learn to abide in the life and love of the triune God, we become different people. Our hearts are softened, our attitudes are reshaped, and our values are reconfigured. It should be noted that we are not passive observers, but rather, active participants, through Spirit power as opposed to willpower.

“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” Romans 8:29 (ESV)

What is my identity as a Christian, and what is its relationship to my ability to become like Jesus?

Important things to keep in mind when thinking about your identity:

- How you answer the question, “Who am I?” may be one of the greatest drivers that determines the direction of your life.
- We learn about our identity through the interaction between God the Father and God the Son in Matthew 3:13-17.
 - Just as the God the Son is called *Beloved* by God the Father, so too are we called *beloved* by Him.
 - The Father’s affirmation over Jesus was not based on what He had done, it was based on who He was.
- We will become what we believe we are. Discipleship is the journey of becoming who God says we already are - beloved.
- You can’t earn love and receive love at the same time.

Resource: [The Given Name](#) (sermon), by Pastor Ryan Paulson

What is my role in becoming like Jesus?

First, you must adopt Jesus’ view of you. He believes you can become like Him.

Second, you must define reality - where you really are and where you need to grow - in the context of knowing the Father calls you *beloved*. You must start from where you are, not where you wish you were.

Third, recognize you become more like Jesus through training, not trying.

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully-trained will be like his teacher.” Luke 6:40 (ESV)

The way to train is to adopt spiritual practices or disciplines. These allow us to posture ourselves to be transformed by the Spirit. They are the ways we partner with God as He changes us into the image of Jesus.

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:12-13 (ESV)

Resource: *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Donald S. Whitney
The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives, Dallas Willard
Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us, Adele Ahlberg Calhoun
The Transformed Life (sermon), Pastor Ryan Paulson

Training should be personalized, address our pain, and be seen as an on-going process.

People do not drift toward Holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated.” D.A. Carson

What does it mean to “do as Jesus does”?

The goal of discipleship is never to terminate within oneself. The goal is always for the sake of the other. And Jesus was very clearly calling His disciples to intentionally make disciples who make disciples who make disciples. Therefore, and this is important, to do as Jesus does is to intentionally make disciples who make disciples who make disciples, and it is impossible to be a mature follower of Jesus without doing this.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20 (ESV)

“And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2 (ESV)

“Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.” Philippians 3:17 (ESV)

What are the main practices that can help us become disciples?

Not surprisingly, time in prayer and time in the Scriptures are the main practices in which we engage to become disciples. However, anyone can read the Bible and pray without the goals of being with Jesus, becoming like Jesus, and doing as Jesus. To say it another way, it is possible to read the Bible and pray and still miss the kingdom of God. But when being with, becoming

like, and doing as are your goals, Scripture and prayer become a means to an end - rather than the end itself.

What are the three questions that disciples must be asking themselves as they read the Bible, pray, and live their lives?

As we read the Scriptures and pray, we should always be asking ourselves these three questions:

1. What is Jesus saying to me?
2. What does it look like for me to be obedient?
3. Who can I tell?

As we ask ourselves these questions, and then live out the answers on which we arrive, we ensure continued growth and maturity.

Becoming a Disciple at EFCC

- ❖ The Call or Invitation of Jesus
 - Matthew 4:19.
 - Also include “kingdom” language, i.e. a disciple is someone learning to live in the KOG and teaching others how to do the same.
- ❖

Main Website

- ❖ What is discipleship?
- ❖ What is our definition of a disciple?
- ❖ What are the goals of a disciple?
- ❖ What is the methodology of discipleship?
- ❖ What are our discipleship values?
- ❖ Resources for further study, further practice, further growth.
- ❖ Sermon #1 from the Way

FAQs

- What is the Kingdom?
-

Proposed FAQ's

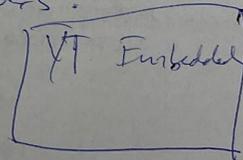
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Becoming a Disciple at EFCC

What does the Bible call Jesus' followers?

Disciple = 3x

Disciple = 269x



What was Jesus' invitation to disciples?

Matt 4:19



Being With Resources
Read Bible, Pray, Worship

Becoming Like Resources
Groups, Classes, Retreats

Doing As
Service opportunities

BECOMING A DISCIPLE @ EFCC

What is a disciple? / Discipleship
How? (Method) • What is Jesus' invitation?
Goals • Kingdom

With
Like
As

- Simple & Clear
- low text
- Diagrams / Napkin diagram.
- Explain Matt 4:19
 - link to today's sermon. Embedded YOUTUBE
 - W/L/A

FAQ

- more in depth
- deeper dive
- For those who want more