

Homegroup Notes for Week Beginning 5/5/2025.

Introduction:

This term the notes follow aspects of the Disciple series that we are following on Sunday evenings. They are seeking to encourage you to consider ways in which your group can become a place of discipleship, encouraging each other in the way of Christ through a number of discipleship practices.

Jesus' simplest command was two words, 'Follow me'.

Leave what you have been doing and re-learn a new way of life as my disciple.

The Message translation of Matthew 11.28-30 expresses this particularly clearly,

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

To live this life we need to begin with a response to the love of God in Christ that is expressed through the cross and the resurrection, and we need to practise the presence of God through the Holy Spirit, shaping our words, our thoughts and our deeds.

John Mark Comer suggests that this does not happen without thought and discipline. Not to practise this is to find ourselves following someone or something other than Christ.

"For those of us who desire to follow Jesus, here is the reality we must turn and face: If we're not being intentionally formed by Jesus himself, then it's highly likely we are being unintentionally formed by someone or something else."

He suggests that the way to be formed in this life involves:

- Being with Christ
- Becoming like Christ
- Doing as Christ would do.

Additional Resources:

John Mark Comer, 'Practicing the Way'

Numerous resources can be found here, practicingtheway.org

Podcasts are available also here,

<https://open.spotify.com/show/08pHYEWdAJgGjpWTcVK9e3?si=085378f07e9548ce>

Disciple 2: Sabbath

What's your current understanding of the Sabbath?

Is the Sabbath a part of your life currently or not?

What thoughts and feelings about Sabbath?

Why do you think people might resist Sabbath?



Read Genesis 2.2-3 and Exodus 20.8

Is Sabbath a Law or is it part of the fabric of creation?

Do you think Sabbath is part of the life into which Christ calls us?

Did Jesus practice Sabbath?

Read Matthew 12.1-14

- What is the Pharisees' understanding of the Sabbath?
- What function do you think it performed for them?
- How do you think Jesus redefined the Sabbath or reclaimed it around himself?
- Read Matthew 12.8
- Read Matthew 12.11-12

Matthew 11.28-30 in *The Message* is rendered,

*Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? **Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest.** Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.*

- How might these words help us to redefine Sabbath and practise it?
- Is Sabbath a day a week, a daily routine, a wider rhythm, a sense of priority or all of the above?
- What would it require to treat one day of the week as a gift from God for you to be restored in Him and to celebrate the goodness of his creation?

Is there anything that you may change in your rhythm of life in response to this?

How might the housegroup support this?

"God blesses time. He consecrates it as holy. Creation is not complete until God rests on the seventh day and contemplates all creation. When we rest, we imitate God. We enter into the rhythm of God's time." Richard Carter

"Sabbath is not simply a pause. It is an occasion for re-imagining all of social life away from coercion and competition to compassionate solidarity. Sabbath is not simply a pause that refreshes - it is the pause that transforms." Walter Brueggemann