

Homegroup Notes for Week Beginning 19/5/2025.

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 3: Prayer



"The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth." Psalm 145.18

Here is a verse that encourages us in prayer. You may be able to share some others.

Prayer is a personal activity- is an 'I-thou' NOT an 'I-it' activity. It involves addressing and being addressed.



Pause at the beginning of your time to pray.

Pause to become aware of God, pause to listen, pause to worship him and to welcome him.



There is so much we could say about prayer. Tonight, begin by reflecting on this statement from Nicky Gumble that was quoted in the evening service:

"Prayer is the most important activity of our lives. It is the way in which we develop a relationship with our Father in heaven. Jesus prayed, and he taught us to do the same.

Prayer brings us peace, refreshes our soul, satisfies our spiritual hunger and assures us of our forgiveness.

Prayer not only changes us, it also changes situations. God answers prayer."

- Does this comment chime with your experience?
- Does it chime with your hopes?
- Can you share what you long for most in prayer.



Read Matthew 6.9-13 and compare it with Luke 11.1-4.

- Do you think this is a set prayer or a pattern to use in prayer?
- What does this prayer suggest about Christian prayer?
 - Who are we addressing?
 - What does it suggest about God and about us?
 - Where are our hopes directed?
 - What is entailed if we pray this prayer sincerely?
 - Later a doxology was added to this prayer: *For the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory are yours, now and for ever.* What does this add?

Andrew spoke on Sunday evening about different styles of prayer. He drew on a talk by Lyndall Bywater, which described prayer styles through a series of beach metaphors. You can see his slides by clicking on the icon below:



Discuss which style chimes with you? Andrew made the point that different people naturally prefer different approaches to prayer.

How might that affect the way you pray together as a group? What do we need to learn as a church about that?



Close by praying slowly through the Lord's Prayer.

Allow time for each phrase to provoke prayer responses.

To follow up on this week, you might like to read 'How to Pray' by Pete Greig or 'Praying like Monks, Living like Fools' by Tyler Staton, or listen to the prayer practice Podcasts here, [Rule of Life Podcast](#)