

Small Group Notes based on Disciple: 5

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- Make sure everyone knows each other's names. Have everyone share a little about themselves and how life is going right now.
- What does it look like to be a disciple?
 - Four Categories to put thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors in:
 - 1: Disciple: follows the ways of God.
 - 2: Church Culture: follows the ways of men.
 - 3: Itching Ears: follow the ways of preference.
 - 4: Ferocious Wolves: follow the ways of darkness.
- This week: Let's talk about commitment.
 - What level of commitment does our Lord require of his disciples?
- The Ask: Follow Me. 20 times the Scriptures record Jesus as saying "follow me." Let's look at:
 - **Matthew 16:24-28.** What is Jesus asking in these verses?
 - Luke has some harsh ones: **Luke 9:57-62, Luke 14:25-33.**
 - Some of this may be hard to understand, but the point is that Jesus is not just playing around. This isn't a soft ask. Jesus asks us to lay our lives down to follow him.
- The Promise: Eternal Life and Abundant Life.
 - The Ask doesn't make sense without The Promise.
 - Jesus asks us to lay our lives down for a cause worth dying for.
 - The great part: When we lay our lives down for Christ we don't die but live!
 - Remember **Matthew 16:25.**
 - Even if we are martyrs, we live forever!
 - Only if we refuse The Ask do we risk destruction.
 - Three results of laying your life down for Christ:
 - 1: Abundant Life – **John 10:10**
 - 2: Rest – **Matthew 11:28-30**
 - 3: Reward – **Mark 10:28-31**
 - Jesus asks us to lay our lives down for a cause worth living for!!
- How do you think our commitment to the Lord is skewed relating to Church Culture, Itching Ears, and Ferocious Wolves? Here are some thoughts from Pastor Mike:
 - Itching Ears: No commitment but feel entitled to all the reward.
 - Some people want to be the worst Christian possible and still go to heaven. That's just ridiculous.
 - Also, those who need to "enjoy" everything. Come on man!
 - Ferocious Wolves: **Acts 20:29-30**
 - This passage is Paul talking to the elders in Ephesus. How tragic.
 - The key is: who are you a disciple of?
 - Bad Church Culture:
 - Stuck in the past expecting people to commit to the old ways rather than to Christ.
 - Rules taught by men are not worth giving your life for.
 - Catering to Itching Ears: creating seekers rather than disciples.
 - I'm all for being seeker sensitive. We shouldn't put up barriers for people because of our stupid pride.
 - But we are called to make disciples rather than seekers.
 - Creating division for personal gain, (bending into being a Ferocious Wolf).
 - It's easy to get people riled up in indignance.
 - When Christians are pitted against Christians you know you have a problem.
- Pray for each other before you finish up!