



LIVING DISCIPLESHIP

Living Discipleship

Bethel Lutheran Mentor Program- Packet Two

Santa, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy, and Jesus Christ—all things that at one time or another in our life we believe in. But there is more to belief than simply thinking something to be true. Real belief shapes our actions. Jesus calls us not just to believe in him but to follow him; to believe with your hands and feet as well as with your heart. Real believers hear his words, to receive his gifts, and live their lives his way.

People who say they believe in Jesus are a dime a dozen. People who follow Jesus are called “disciples” and they are as precious as gold. Disciples are not pussy cats, wimps or nerds. They are not angels or geniuses. Disciples are not necessarily popular, pretty or perfect. They are ordinary people who do the extraordinary thing of following Jesus. Believe it or not, teenagers are some of the best disciples. They know what it’s like to be an outsider. They know what it’s like to need a little help now and again. And like the rest of the world, occasionally they actually manage to put what they know to work for the service of Christ. Come follow. You are called to be a disciple.

Instructions

This packet has three parts, two activities and an evaluation. Each activity contains its own set of directions. Here is an overview of the packet.

Activity One is **“Crosses, Fruit, and Others: The Life of a Disciple”**. In this activity you will do a brief Bible Study and answer some questions. **Do this alone before your “Together in Discipleship” activity.**

Activity Two is **“Together in Discipleship”**. In this activity mentor and teenager do a discipleship “Fruit of Faith” project. You will also discuss your responses to the questions in Activity One marked with an asterisk and then read and discuss a discipleship story. **Prior to meeting with your partner you will need to decide with your partner which of “Fruits of Faith” projects you intend to complete during your time together.**

CROSSES, FRUIT AND OTHERS: THE LIFE OF A DISCIPLE

Activity One

Directions: The purpose of Activity One is to grow in your understanding of discipleship and its importance in the life of a Christian. You will do this in three ways. First you will reflect on two stories in the Bible. Second, you will reflect on the ways that you presently act as a disciple. Third, you will think about ways that you could act as a disciple in the future. Reflect on the questions on this activity sheet and be prepared to discuss those questions marked with an asterisk when you meet with your partner.

“Discipleship” Defined

Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary says that the term “disciple” comes from a Latin word that first meant “pupil” or “learner” and later came to mean follower. It says a disciple is “one who accepts and assists in spreading the beliefs of another.” Discipleship is the act of being a disciple. To be a disciple means to be a student, a follower and in the case of Jesus much, much more.

Read these verses from Luke 9:22-23

“The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”

What does Jesus say will happen to the “Son of Man”?

What does Jesus say a disciple or follower of Christ must do?

Read these verses from Luke 9:24-25

“For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?”

How does this verse make you feel?

*What do you think this means? How would you write it if you were to write it in your own words?

A Sack of Gold Coins

Think of your life as a leather sack filled with gold coins. Each coin represents an hour of your life; each day a handful of coins. Part of “losing” your life for Christ’s sake means “spending” your hours and days for the sake of all those people loved by Christ. Giving your time and energy to others for the sake of Christ is like handing them gold coins from the wealth of your life.

*Can you name someone who has, for the sake of Christ, spent a portion of his or her life on you? Explain.

*Name one way that you have spent a part of your life for another or others for the sake of Christ.

*Name one other specific way that you *could* spend your life for another for the sake of Christ. Explain.

The Sheep and Goats

Jesus' last public sermon was about discipleship. He spoke the words to his followers as he sat on the hillside across the valley from Jerusalem. In the valley below he could see the sheep and their shepherds. He knew that his death was not far off. He knew how he wanted his disciples to live until he would come again at the end of time. In this passage Jesus paints a picture of the way he will greet his followers when He comes again.

Read these verses from Matthew 25:31-40

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in; or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Jesus leaves no doubt about how those who follow him will act. He also makes it clear where he stands in relationship to the underdogs of the world. Jesus says that he is one of them. To follow Jesus means to treat the downtrodden in the same manner that we would treat Jesus himself. List the concrete ways in which followers of Jesus will respond to the people they find in desperate circumstances.

Desperate Circumstance:

Response:

1. Hungry

1. Feed them

2.

2.

3.

3.

4.

4.

5.

5.

6.

6.

7.

7.

*Name at least one specific way that you could act on these discipleship expectations in your congregation or community.

Remember to take this sheet with you when you meet with your partner. Also remember that you need to plan which "Fruit of Faith" experience you will do with your partner before you meet with your partner.

TOGETHER IN DISCIPLESHIP

Activity Two

Directions: The purpose of Activity Two is to learn about discipleship through discussion and through participating in a concrete act of discipleship. In this activity you and your partner will complete one **“FRUIT OF FAITH”** experience together. Next, you will discuss together a modern day parable. **You will need to complete Activity One and decide which “FRUIT OF FAITH” experience you will be doing before you and your partner meet together.**

“FRUIT OF FAITH” EXPERIENCE

Faith isn't faith until it bears fruit. You can say all the right things and know all the right verses but unless those words and thoughts find their way into action your faith simply is not faith. The **“FRUIT OF FAITH”** experience is an opportunity to put what you believe about following Jesus into action. It is not a big step but it is a step. This step will be a little easier because you are taking it with a friend. Before you meet with your partner review the following experiences, together with your partner select which option you would like to complete. Complete the experience together.

Option One:

Travel with your partner to a nursing home, care facility, or hospital and spend an hour or so visiting with one or more of the residents or patients there. (This may take a bit of set-up before hand, please call ahead to confirm the place you will be visiting. Most times they appreciate people who come in and visit, they just need to know when you are coming!)

Option Two:

Select a person or persons in your community in need of help around the house or yard (who is not a member of your family). Work together with your partner cleaning house, doing yard work, or whatever tasks the person or persons think would be useful. Accept no payment.

Option Three:

Plan a special meal for an anonymous family in need. Go to the grocery store with your partner and buy everything needed to prepare the meal. Be sure to add a “personal touch” to the meal, something that will make the meal special. Write a brief note to the family and give the meal box to Michael or Daryl. **(Please be sure to coordinate this ahead of time with Michael or Daryl, so a family can be in place when you make the meal.)**

Option Four:

Spend some time working in the local food shelf or meal distributing site. Bethel has this opportunity available every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday through CFR which is served in the basement of Bethel. Please contact CFR for specific times and the help that is needed. (507- 281- 5061)

Option Five:

Contact a nursing home, jail, hospital, or other institution and make arrangements to deliver a cake, cookies, or bars to the institution. Be sure to ask them what their requirements are regarding reception of baked goods. Together with your partner, bake the goods and deliver them.

TALKING ABOUT TOGETHER IN DISCIPLESHIP

1. Review and discuss the questions in Activity One that have an asterisk beside them.
2. Read together “A Parable” by Dr. Wedel below and discuss the three questions.

A Parable

By Dr. Theodore Wedel

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur, there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat; but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves, they went out day or night, tirelessly searching for the lost.

Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and gave of their time and money and effort for the support of the work. New boats were bought and new crews were trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Some of the new members of the lifesaving station were unhappy that the buildings were so crude and so poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in an enlarged building. Now the lifesaving station became a popular gather place for its members, and they redecorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely because they used it as a sort of club. Less of the members were interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions so they hired lifeboat crews to do this work. The lifesaving motif still prevailed in the club decorations; however, and there was a liturgical lifeboat in the room where club initiations were held.

About this time a larger ship was wrecked off the coast. The hired crews brought boatloads of cold, wet, half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick, and some of them had black skin and some had yellow skin. The beautiful new club was considerably messed up, so the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwrecks could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities as being unpleasant and a

hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a lifesaving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the lives of all the various kind of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast. And they did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself; and, if you visit that seacoast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore.

1. How is this parable a story of Christ's Church and "Discipleship"?
2. What causes churches to change into "social clubs" instead of "lifesaving stations"?
3. Does this story relate to your church? Why? Why not?