

faith reframed

ESSENTIALS FOR FOLLOWING JESUS TOGETHER

Week 3 | Reframing Discipleship, part 2

framing question

HOW DO WE REORIENT OUR LIVES AROUND JESUS?

REFRAMING FORMATION

Psalm 119:97-105—Scripture is the story meant to define and orient our lives

We are all living a story (told by family, work, peers, media)

- What is my life for?
- What do I need?

The stories we spend the most time with shape our values, choices, and ultimately our lives

Scripture tells us the truth about

- who God is and
- who we are.

REFRAMING REPENTANCE

James 1:22—Listening and Responding: the pattern of a disciple

Our goal is not merely to understand God's word, but to submit ourselves to it.

- Repentance is good news!
 - Alignment with our identity as God's kids
- Discipline > willpower
 - Shame vs exercise
 - Constraint vs freedom

How we listen: scripture, spirit and sacrament

- reading, prayer and discernment in the body of Christ
 - Jesus is alive and at work among us!

How we respond: trust as action

- What is the truth?
- Are there lies in my life that the truth exposes?
- How can I act on that truth, concretely, today?

table talk

Honesty is a must as we seek to grow in following Jesus together, but this is impossible without mutual respect and confidentiality. Make room for each other to share. As you discuss the questions below, we ask you to avoid advice giving. People are likely to share personal things, and you may want to tell them what to do about it. Instead of giving advice, ask questions. Ask why. Ask them to elaborate. Trust that God is at work. As a group, feel free to focus on the questions that seem most useful to you. You are not required to get through them all, and no one has to share. Building trust takes time!

group discussion questions

1. What are the stories that most define the way you live your life every day?

What have you learned that your life is for?

What have you learned that you really need?

From:

Your family

School/Work

Your peers

Media/social media

Other significant voices?

2. What have you learned from scripture about:

What your life is for?

What you really need?

3. How does the idea of "spiritual discipline" hit you?

How does change/growth usually happen in other areas of your life?

4. Is there room to "listen and respond" in your life?

How might this discipline become a regular practice for you?

What might it change?

homework

IN A SPIRIT OF COMPASSIONATE CURIOSITY—ROMANS 5:8

Try reading scripture and praying at regular intervals this week. When you do, consider:

What is the good news here for me today? (listening)

Find some concrete way of acting on that good news! (responding)

It's ok if it's really small!

week 3 review

Friends,

During week two, we said that Jesus is King and we are his children. He invites us to follow him for the same reasons that any good parent does: he loves us and it is what is best for us. As we submit to him, we will become like him over time. This is what our lives are for, but it doesn't happen on accident. It takes practice.

Today, we press a bit deeper, asking: **How do we reorient our lives around Jesus?** In other words, what kind of "practice" does it take?

Our answer: the practice of **listening and responding**.

We listen first by reading God's word, and also through prayer and discernment in the body of Christ. How we listen matters. There are two big ideas here.

First, Scripture is the story that is meant to define and orient our lives. It isn't just a bunch of facts to learn. It is the truth about who God is and who we are. It reveals what we really need and what our lives are for.

Every family, community and profession has its own story about what your life is for. These stories are the lived values of our communities: the pursuit of money, beauty or a certain kind of reputation (for example) become what our entire lives are organized around. We believe these stories because the people we trust live them every day. We must go back to scripture constantly to re-narrate our lives, the true story of who we are, or the other stories will always be the ones that define us.

Second, we listen not just to understand but to submit. Culture has trained us to consume information passively, without acting on it. We tend to approach God's word the same way we do the news or social media. Instead, every encounter with truth is an invitation to action, more like an important meeting with your boss or doctor. As such, we set out this pattern:

LISTEN According to God, what is the truth (about who I am, what I need)?
What other stories have I been living instead?

RESPOND Make a plan to trust God by stepping into the truth i.e. putting it into practice in a specific way

EXAMPLE

TRUTH I am God's beloved child, this identity is the meaning and purpose of my life.

LIE I am only as valuable as what I produce. My contribution is the meaning of my life. This is what actually determines what I do every day.

ACTION I will set aside 10 minutes 3x each day this week to stop doing and sit with God's love for me.

As we do this work, little by little, daily, over years, we will find that Christ is transforming us. This is how discipleship happens.

And again friends, we do not do any of this to earn God's love! We do it to align our lives with his, because that is what is good and it is what we were made for!

The Lord bless and keep you as you continue to trust God with your own specific plans this week!