

# Called to Follow

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## Introduction to the Series on Discipleship

Over the next several weeks, we will explore what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. We'll delve into different aspects of discipleship, learn from the Scriptures, and reflect on how we can live out our faith more fully.

### Scripture Reading: Matthew 4:18-22

"As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him."

This is the word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

### Key Points from Today's Sermon

#### 1. Understanding Discipleship:

- The term "disciple" comes from the Latin "discipulus," meaning a learner or follower.
- In the biblical context, a disciple is someone who not only follows Jesus but also seeks to understand and live according to His teachings.
- Unlike Jewish rabbis who waited for students to seek them out, Jesus actively called individuals to follow Him.

#### 2. Wesleyan Perspective on Discipleship:

- Discipleship is deeply rooted in grace, particularly prevenient grace, which prepares our hearts and enables us to respond to God's call.
- It's about responding to God's initiating grace, recognizing that Jesus seeks us out and calls us by name.

#### 3. Relationship and Mission:

- Jesus called His disciples into a community with a purpose, sending them out to fish for people and participate in the work of God's kingdom.
- Discipleship involves growing in a personal relationship with Jesus and engaging in the mission to make disciples and transform lives.

#### 4. Immediate and Wholehearted Response:

- Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John immediately left their nets and followed Jesus, demonstrating trust and commitment.
- True discipleship requires trust, commitment, and often, sacrifice and reordering of priorities.

#### 5. Modern-Day Discipleship:

- Jesus calls us in the middle of our daily lives, whether at work, home, or in our communities.
  - Responding to His call requires immediate and radical commitment, leaving behind anything that hinders our walk with Him.
- 6. Community and Personal Growth:**
- Living out our call involves coming together as a church, supporting each other, and engaging in the means of grace—prayer, Scripture reading, worship.
  - Reflecting on our gifts and talents, and how they can be used in service to God's kingdom, helps us find our place within the church's mission.

### **Reflection Questions**

- How is Jesus calling you to follow Him today?
- What immediate steps can you take to respond to His call?
- Are there "nets" in your life—things that you need to leave behind to follow Him fully?

### **Conclusion**

The call to follow Jesus is both an invitation and a challenge. It's an invitation to experience the fullness of life in a close relationship with our Savior and a challenge to step boldly into the mission He has for us. Let us respond with immediacy and commitment, trusting in God's grace to guide and sustain us.

### **Closing Prayer**

Gracious God, we thank You for calling us to follow Your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to respond to Your call with the same immediacy and commitment as the first disciples. Give us the courage to leave behind anything that hinders our walk with You. Guide us in our journey of discipleship, and help us to grow in our relationship with You and in our mission to make disciples and transform lives. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.