



The Call of Levi: Caravaggio

Week 3 - Discipleship
Prayer and discipleship

Diocesan Lent Course

FOR YOUTH



YEAR OF PRAYER 2018

Week 3 - Discipleship

Prayer and discipleship

Aim

To explore what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and what this means for the rest of our lives. Unpacking a little about how we should pray and the part prayer plays in our own discipleship.

Learning outcomes

We are all called to be disciples of Jesus. It doesn't matter what we've done or where we've been, Jesus wants to be in relationship with us. We're looking this week at how we grow as disciples through prayer and intentional time spent with God. Young people should have the chance to explore how they set time aside for God in their every day lives.

Materials needed

- Screen and sound for videos.
- Scented candle wax blocks cut into small pieces.
- Large scented wax burner.
- A copy of the Calling of Levi painting by Caravaggio either printed out or on a screen.
- Six discussion bible verses printed out.
- Examen cards printed out for young people to use in the creative prayer and take home as part of the takeaway.

Any videos or downloadable resources needed in this session can be accessed from:

youth.chichester.anglican.org/lent

Alternatively; from the

Diocesan youth website

navigate to 'Year of Prayer' then 'Lent Course for Youth'

Breathe...Pray...Let's begin...

Quick recap

Ask the group how they've got on during the week. Did they use their crosses during the week? Have they had any opportunities to pray with or for anyone during the week? How have they noticed their prayers changing after two weeks of looking at prayer now?

Icebreaker

Alphabet pockets

Try and find an item starting with each letter of the alphabet in bags, pockets and around.

Call out a letter of the alphabet from the front and the team who can bring something to you first wins.

They can only bring something from a pocket or bag.

If your group doesn't bring a lot of stuff with them then you can send them out around the building in search of something beginning with each letter for 5 minutes before you start calling letters of the alphabet. The team that managed to get the most letters wins.

Video

This is a satirical video about the ways different people pray. You may have seen these before. Are there any others people would add?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-zaZZZsyVXI>

You can use this video as an introduction video if it will fit better with your group rather than a focus.



A little thought

Jesus spoke to a couple of fishermen at a beach and they seemed to drop everything and followed him! What do you think Jesus had that made them do this? He must have had the x-factor, something they could see or sense that he was worth following.

So off they trot following this man they have never met! They live with him and follow him everywhere, he seems to tell them things they have never known before and they hang off his every word. They travel with him, they serve him, they eat with him. They never leave his side.

Now if you hang around with someone a lot, a best friend or a sibling the chances are you pick up on their habits and mannerisms. This is what a disciple is! It is more than just a pupil or friend – the disciples were becoming like Jesus. They began to understand what he talked about and Jesus gave them the chance to have a go at praying, healing, speaking to others. Jesus knew all along the bigger picture, he knew he was training them to go further, he was making sure they would be able to carry on when Jesus was no longer with them in person.

So a disciple is like an apprentice but a little bit more, it is like your best friend but more, it is like a family member but more.

Who do you copy, follow or act like? Are they a good influence or perhaps not so much?

Creative Prayer Ideas

Examen Station

You can download the Examen infographic from the website. Take some time to allow the young people to work through the six steps of the examen.

1. Find a quiet place - get everyone to leave their mobile phone in a box with you. Find a space on their own and sit comfortably.
2. Think about something you're grateful for. Thank God for this.
3. Ask for freedom. Freedom from the things that trip us up and distract us. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you vision to see these distractions.
4. Review your day - Replay your day in your mind and look for the moments that stand out most to you. These are the events God is trying to tell you more about. Examine these more deeply
5. Talk to God - tell him what's on your mind, thank him, ask for forgiveness, be open and honest about your life
6. Finish your prayer - Finish by praying the Lord's prayer

After they've completed this they you may want them to make a physical act to help cement the process. This candle wax response may work for your group.

Candle wax

Our discipleship and the way we grow with Jesus relies on many things, our personal prayer and study, through church, through mentoring, through youth groups and worship and everything that makes up our christian lives.

Have a few different scented/coloured wax blocks broken up into small pieces.

Invite young people to come and take a few different pieces of wax and place them into a melting bowl over a flame to represent everything mixing together to make something new. A colourful mixture of our lives as a representation of the walk of discipleship.

Bible Reading

Matthew 9:9-13

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Reflection

Listen to "Blinded by Your Grace Pt.2" by Stormzy. This song was in the charts last year and talks about the ups and downs of life and how he's had to rely on God. Stormzy, Like Matthew has not lived a perfect life, but God has called him, saved him and used him. You can view the lyrics here <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/stormzy/blindedbyyourgracept2.html>

Whilst it's playing show the image of Caravaggio's Calling of Levi. Either on a screen or print out a large copy of it so that everyone can see it.



When the song has finished ask the young people:

What do you **think** is being depicted in the painting?

What did you **feel** whilst listening to the song and examining the painting?

What captures your **imagination** in this image?

How does this inform the way you understand who God is?

Game

Clapping game

Everyone kneels in a circle and places their hands on the floor in front of them. Everyone moves their right hand over the top of the left hand of the person on their right. You should end up with every hand being next to somebody else's hand on either side.

You are now going to send a "hand tap" around the circle. One person starts and taps their hand on the floor. Going clockwise around the circle the next hand taps (this hand should belong to the person next to the person that did the first tap), then the next hand along and so on.

If somebody does a double tap then the direction changes

If you hesitate or tap out of turn you lose your hand. When both your hands are gone you're out.

The winner is the last person left with a hand in the game.

Discussion

Start by giving out these 6 bible verses.

#1 – Jesus said to the people who believed in him, ‘ You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings.’ – John 8:31

#2 – And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free – John 8:32

#3 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses. Telling people about me everywhere – in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria and to the ends of the earth. – Acts 1:8

#4 – Jesus told his disciples that they should always pray and never give up – Luke 18:1

#5 – When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples – John 15:8

#6 – Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples – John 13:34

What do these passages tell us about what a disciple is?

Draw out what is a disciple. Discipleship is about growing with God and being nurtured in our faith. How can we make sure we’re investing in our own discipleship?

What role does prayer take in growing as a disciple of Jesus?

Apart from the disciples living with Jesus in a different time and culture we’re called in the same way and we can be filled with the spirit in the same way. How does prayer help us in our discipleship journey? How does the church help us in our discipleship journey?

If we’re all disciples what does this mean for how we should act differently to the rest of the world?

How should we pray? Regularly and consistently. How should we treat others? What impact should this have on the rest of our lives? What can we expect to see change in our lives as we grow closer to God?

Takeaway

Celtic christianity talks about thin spaces. Places where the gap between heaven and earth is thinner. Places where it’s easier to meet with God. Part of the Examen is about finding a quiet place, or **thin space**. If there are thin spaces then there must also be thick places, places where it’s harder to meet with God. This week find a thin space. It may be at home, it may be in the country side, in your garden etc. Take a photo of this thin space and set it as your wallpaper as a reminder to pray. Bring your phone next week to show where you found your thin space.

Take the examen card away with you and use it during the week in your thin space.