

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE WEEK FOUR *FOLLOW*

ICEBREAKER: Favorite BBQ Place – Do you own cowboy boots?

STORY: Who is sharing their story this week? 3 positives and 3 negatives that have impacted who you are today.

LEADER: We are continuing in our Sermon Series *Follow* and exploring what it really means to follow Jesus and have a relationship with Him. Matthew 16:24-25 is the foundation for this.

READ: Matthew 16:24-25

QUESTION: What does “following” imply?

You're not first, you're not in control, you don't fully know the route, the pace, the destination, the challenges, or how it will turn out. You will have to know and trust and stay in contact with the leader. Faith will be required.

Leader: *Jesus wanted His followers to understand that following meant knowing & being in a growing relationship with Him.*

QUESTION: How was that different than what the Jews had been taught? Before Christ, God laid out many promises to the Jews that were dependent of them doing something specific. Then they added on about 600 commandments to follow in order to be what they considered a good Jew and a good person.

QUESTION: What types of relationships inevitably comes out trying to be good enough for God? Transactional relationships where we think if we do “good” He will be good to us. (Back scratching) Or judgmental relationships where we think we're better because we look down on others who aren't as “good” as us.

READ: John 13:24-25

QUESTION: How is this commandment & new way of thinking even more demanding than the first ten, and the 590 more commandments they added? (You have to ditch the obvious sins like lying, cheating, gossip...& sacrificially love as Jesus loved)

QUESTION: How might our family relationships growing up make this even more challenging? (Maybe we rarely saw it in action and have no baseline or model for it. Maybe our relationships growing up were performance-based)

QUESTION: What is the relationship between internal change and external change? (Internal produces external. It's authentic.)

QUESTION: What begins to change when we begin experiencing a true relationship with God?

1. We can have honest conversations with Him.
2. We can ditch the insecurity that comes from not being perfect and trying to perform for Him and others
3. We're free to be open with others and look for ways to serve and bless them.
4. We're free to love our enemies or those who could never help or love us back.

QUESTION: Who could you reach out to this week unconditionally and demonstrate this kind of authentic care?

LEADER PRAYER: *God thank you for the incredible price you paid to make a way for us to have a relationship with You. Help us do that with others this week that they would see you as well.*

LEADER: Who will share their story next week?
Starting Point @ Richmond campus begins this week at 10:30 Sunday.
Four Weeks. Homework: Read Philippians Chapter 2.