Practicing the Way

SESSION 01: FOLLOWING JESUS



TEACHING NOTES

Who are you following? Everybody is following <i>somebody</i> . Put another way: We're all disciples. The question isn't, "Are you a disciple?" but, " <i>Who</i> or <i>what</i> are you a disciple <i>of</i> ?" In this session, we explore what it means to be a disciple or apprentice of Jesus.
To apprentice under Jesus is to organize your life around three driving goals:
with Jesus
like Jesus

SCRIPTURE

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew 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.

- _____ as he did

-Mark 1v16-18

PRACTICE

Developing a daily prayer rhythm							

One of the best ways to begin to "be with Jesus" is by developing a daily prayer rhythm.

Here are a few suggestions for your practice:

Find a quiet place that is distraction-free.

This could be a corner in your home or a nearby park. Find somewhere that you can focus and be at peace.

Find a quiet time.

For many people, first thing upon waking is the best possible time to do this; but for you, it may be before bed, or while your baby is napping mid-morning, or on a lunch break. The general rule is: Give God your best time of the day.

Come to quiet.

If at all possible (unless you're using an app such as Lectio 365 or Pray As You Go to guide your prayer time), put your phone away in another room. Start with a few deep breaths ... in and out of your nose, and let your mind and body calm down.

This may take a few minutes. You're not in a hurry. And then...

Open your heart to God in prayer.

Again, there's no "right" way to pray. But you don't have to start from scratch. For thousands of years, followers of Jesus have used the Psalms for daily prayer. The Psalms are a collection of poetic prayers found in the middle of the Bible, and they were designed to be prayed, not just read.

You can pray one psalm or pray a few; it's up to you. You can start in Psalm 1 and keep going to pray a selection. If you want to pray one psalm, here are some we suggest you start with: Psalms 1, 23, 37, 40, 42-43, 63, 84, 86, 103, and 139. This whole exercise can be done in five minutes, or it can easily take up to an hour — again, that's up to you. The key is: Start where you are, not where you feel you "should" be. If two or three minutes is all you can make happen, start there and take the next step.



PRACTICE REFLECTION

Reflection is a key component in our spiritual formation. Like practice, it allows what we learn to become a part of who we are.

Before your next time together, take five to ten minutes to journal out your answers to the following three questions.

O1 What was most challenging about practicing a rhythm of prayer?
O2 What is something you enjoyed about it?
03 What are you hoping for as you continue this rhythm of prayer?

OPTIONAL

If you'd like to continue your conversation, here are some additional questions for reflection:

- 1. When you envision starting your day with silence, solitude, and prayer, what excites you? What challenges you?
- 2. Think about your week and come up with a plan. When and where will you engage in this practice?



SPIRITUAL HEALTH REFLECTION

to move forward on your spiritual journey.

If you didn't get a chance to take the Spiritual Health Reflection before Session O1, please remember to do so before you come back together. Visit practicingtheway.org and create an account or follow the QR code, and answer the prompt questions slowly and prayerfully. You can come back to the Spiritual Health Reflection as often as you'd like (we recommend one to two times a year) to chart your growth and continue



PROCESS TOGETHER

In your group, take this handout along so that you can write down things that you hear that might be helpful to you or that you find interesting.

This is an important opportunity to join in the discussion and share experiences.

It's important to remember that not everyone will have the same experience as you, so listen and be a helpful encouragement to the other members.

NOTES			



FURTHER RESOURCES

The Practices — An in-depth look at each of the practices including a further 4 sessions presented by John Mark Comer and team on Prayer can be found on the website: www.practicingtheway.org/prayer

The book - We highly recommend reading the book *Practicing the Way* by John Mark Comer alongside this Course, as it will greatly enhance your learning experience.

The Podcast - Episode O1 of the Practicing the Way podcast.

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