

OPENING QUESTIONS

1. Describe a situation where (for any reason) you were asked / expected to follow someone. What did you feel the expectations were?
2. When Jesus said those two simple words to the disciples, does their response surprise you? Why?

BIG IDEA

The first thing Jesus says to **anyone**, is also the same thing He says to **everyone**: "follow me."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This weekend we looked at the culture of following a leader as it is defined by Jesus. As we look into it further in this study, it becomes apparent that the early disciples weren't that much different from each one of us.

1. Read Mark 1:1-16 together and discuss some of the challenges there are to following Jesus today (both for those who are already following and those who have yet to follow).
2. As a group, come up with your own definition of authority. How does that match up with the way Jesus is described in verse 22? What is it about following someone with real authority that makes it easier to follow them?

Tim Keller defines religion as: "Advise on how you must live to earn your way to heaven."

3. Why is it that so many are drawn into religion? List a few things that are both a pull towards religion, and a push from it.
4. Read John 15:4; another way to say "remain in me," might be to "stay close." Discuss the implications of a relationship Jesus as He seems to define it here.
5. In John 14:9, Jesus is frustrated with the disciples as they still don't seem to know who He really is.
 - a. Find a few places in the other Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, where at least one of the disciples recognized Jesus as the actual Son of God. Why do you think it took so long for them to actually see it?
 - b. Why did Jesus ask them to follow Him in the first place if they didn't believe He was the Son of God yet?
 - c. What are some things we can learn from His approach?

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6. In 1 Samuel 16 we find the story of God choosing King David to lead His people – read verse 7. Can you think of a few things that make it hard for us to see people as God sees them? What gets in the way of seeing people clearly (through God’s eyes?). How often do you think Christians get in the way of others seeing Jesus clearly?
7. Read Mark 1:17 again.
 - a. Practically speaking, what does it mean that He “will” show us how to follow?
 - b. How hard is it to change? How much should we take comfort in the fact that Jesus promises to help us? Does this free us of responsibility to grow ourselves?
 - c. What motivates you to grow closer to Jesus?

CHALLENGE

Is there anything holding you back from fully following? Are there any fears regularly playing out in your mind that you need to address – give them back to Jesus and let the words of 1 John 1:18 (“perfect love drives out fear”) rest in your heart.

PRAYER

Pray for each other that God would continue to reveal Himself to you; that your faith would grow; that you would fully realize the privilege of being called to follow.

As you close, read John 15:9-17 together.