

A black and white photograph of a crown with thorns, likely representing the crown of thorns. The crown is ornate with two large circular jewels. The thorns are sharp and intertwined with the crown's structure.

FROM KING TO KINGDOM

GROWTH GROUP STUDY GUIDE



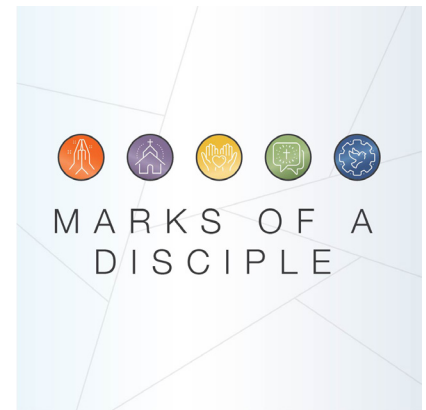
The definition of the word “disciple” implies that one is not only a student or a learner, but one is actively following. A disciple is one whose entire life is structured around living a life that is patterned after the one they follow. The reason that we can follow Jesus in this way is because He was the perfect example of someone who gave His entire life to the mission that God the Father laid before Him. Often when we talk about the five marks of being a disciple we rightly look within and check to see how we are interacting with them. For this season of Lent, let’s turn our gaze toward Jesus and study how, as He approached the cross and faced His very death, He was THE example of how to be a disciple. Jesus showed us that our prayers, presence, gifts witness and service, when done in the name of love, will always point to God.

February 26 | Overview

Before you begin this Growth Group session, read the meditation found on the inside cover of your Growth Group materials.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.



Jesus is our ultimate role model, in today's lingo, our GOAT (Greatest Of All Time). From day one, as Jesus invited the disciples to follow Him, He told them He would make them "fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). In essence, He was telling them their hearts would be changed, and with the help of the Holy Spirit He would show them how to serve others.

Jesus spent His time on the earth giving us the perfect example to follow. He faced the same challenges we must endure (plus many more), and always found strength in the Father. He was tempted by the devil, mocked by the social

elite, and condemned to death. In times of distress, Jesus showed us how to turn to the scriptures for guidance and forgive our persecutors. Hebrews 2:17 tells us that Jesus was "fully human in every way", yet he possessed the power to calm the storms (Matthew 8:27). He could have faced His challenges in so many other ways, but he chose humility and service to God. Our prayer should be that we would do the same. The old hymn "He Could Have Called 10,000 Angels" reminds us:

Our response should be to choose humility and service to God

*He could have called ten thousand angels
To destroy the world and set Him free.
He could have called ten thousand angels,
But He died alone, for you and me.*

Scripture: Hebrews 2:10-18

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passages aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. According to Hebrews 2:10 we're told that Jesus was "perfect through what he suffered". How could Jesus be made perfect if He was God and already perfect?
2. Christ is our example through His teaching. Read Luke 6:20-49. What are some of the most important lessons from Jesus found in this passage?
3. Christ is our example through His actions. Read John 4:1-26. Jesus offers living water to the Samaritan woman with a complicated history. Why are the actions of Jesus in this passage an example for us to live as Christians?
4. Christ was tempted, just as we are tempted. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How did Jesus respond when tempted in the wilderness? How can His response be an example for us when we are tempted?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13. What assurance does Paul give us that we are not alone when facing temptation?
6. In Hebrews 2:16 we find:
"For surely it is not angels He helps, but Abraham's descendants."
Why do we know this is true?

Questions for Application:

1. In our Hebrews passage it describes Jesus bringing the many sons and daughters to glory by being the “pioneer of their salvation”. Other translations use similar terms, such as leader, founder and author. Commentaries sometimes describe Christ as the trailblazer. How do these descriptions of Jesus help us deal with temptations that we face in our lives?
2. When you consider the qualities of a role model, what are some character traits that set someone apart as one who can be looked up to or followed?
3. What are specific character traits of Jesus that you desire to emulate? Share a time when you intentionally modeled your behavior after Christ.
4. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. Have you experienced times when you felt tempted “beyond what you can bear”? Were you able to find “a way out so you can endure it”?
5. What are examples of steps you routinely take to avoid temptations?
6. Many times people comment that they have little faith in leaders today, saying things like “they just don’t understand what I’m going through”. How does your understanding of Christ’s character help you trust Him as your leader?

Resources: *Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic*

Lent Bible Reading plan (40 days): <https://www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/lent?version=NIV>

The Life-Renewing Words of Jesus: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/35739-the-life-renewing-words-of-jesus-by-adam-ramsey>

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?
2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship – prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

Reflect on where Jesus, our ultimate role model, is leading you today.

NOTES

March 5 | Service

Before you begin this Growth Group session, read the meditation found on the inside cover of your Growth Group materials.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.



In Mark 10:45 Jesus told the disciples that He came not to be served but

to serve others. Then through His actions, Christ showed us how to serve. Jesus fed the hungry and healed the sick. He cared for the poor and raised the dead. He even washed the disciples' feet. His example showed us how to serve others with love and humility.



Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.
Philippians 2:3

Jesus also tells of the judgement day, and about how those that are granted eternal life in heaven are told *“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you*

clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” (Matthew 25:34-36). It seems pretty clear that God's will is for us to serve one another, and Paul reminds us that we are to serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13).

What can you do to serve your neighbor?

If the Savior of the world can bend down and wash the filthy, sandal-clad feet of the disciples, then what can you do to serve your neighbor?

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-4, John 13:3-4, 12-17

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passages aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. In John 13 we read how the Savior of the world washed the feet of the disciples. When Christ came to Peter, he said *“You shall never wash my feet”*, but Jesus replied *“Unless I wash you, you have no part with me”*. Was Jesus merely talking about the act of washing feet? What else could He be telling the disciples? Refer to John 13:13-17.
2. The miracles of Jesus were often examples of acts of service. Read Matthew 14:13-21. What are the different ways that Jesus served the people in this passage?
3. Jesus tells His disciples that they are to lead by serving all. In Mark 9:35 we read:
“Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”
How has Jesus demonstrated this in His life?
4. In Philippians 2:1-4, what brings joy to Paul?
5. How do the words of Paul in Philippians 2:3-4 relate to “service” within the context of this week’s sermon?
6. In Proverbs 3:27 we read:
“Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.”
Proverbs is considered one of the books of wisdom literature in the Bible. What is the pearl of wisdom in this proverb? How do you think Jesus would interpret “from those to whom it is due”?

Questions for Application:

1. Christ demonstrates for us how to serve others with humility and love. In our society today, what importance do these attributes have?
2. When you consider serving others, what is your preferred method of service?
3. Matthew 25:34-36 gives examples of service to others. What are some additional ways that we, as individuals and as the church, can serve others?
4. What does it mean to be a sacrificial servant of Jesus? When do you give up something you desire to do to fill a need for someone else? Name specific ways that Jesus sacrificially served others.
5. Describe a time when you served someone else but discovered that you were, in fact, the one who was richly blessed by your personal offering of service.
6. In Galatians 6:10 we read:
“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”
Can you think of ways that we (the church) follow the advice of Paul?
7. In the Living Bible, Philippians 2:3 reads:
“Don’t be selfish; don’t live to make a good impression on others.”
Is demonstrating integrity synonymous with making a good impression?

Resources: *Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic*

The Last Apostle: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/35105-the-last-apostle-john-11>

The Humility of Jesus: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/33736-the-humility-of-jesus>

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship – prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

Identify a need in the community, and then volunteer to help with it. Better yet, convince your friends to help too!

NOTES

March 12 | Prayers

Before you begin this Growth Group session, read the meditation found on the inside cover of your Growth Group materials.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.



Jesus showed us how we should pray. He not only gave us the Lord's



*To be a Christian without prayer
is no more possible than to be
alive without breathing.
Martin Luther*

Prayer, but He also showed us the manner in which we should pray. On the night that Jesus was arrested, His prayer asked the Father to protect the disciples “so that they may be one as we are one” and “protect them from the evil one” (John 17:11,15). He goes on to say “I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message” (John 17:20). He knew what fate lay before Him over the next few hours, and yet He took time to ask the Father to protect His believers (including you and me). This was not just wishful thinking. This was absolute confidence. Christ prayed with complete certainty that the Father would hear His prayer. Jesus had unwavering trust in God.

*We are to pray with fearless
confidence.*

Paul tells us in Ephesians 3:12 that because we are followers of Christ that “we may approach God with freedom and confidence”. When we look at the word he used for “freedom” in the Greek, we learn that it means fearless confidence, cheerful courage, boldness, and with assurance. Just imagine, because of Christ, we have the opportunity to lift our joys and concerns to God Almighty with confidence and boldness.

Scripture: Philippians 1:3-8, John 17:10-12, 25

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passages aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Who is Jesus praying for in John 17:10-12?
2. What does Jesus mean when He prays to the Father to protect them “so they may be one as We are one”?
3. After He curses the fig tree, Jesus teaches His disciples about prayer (refer to Matthew 21:18-22). What is the lesson about prayer that Jesus wants His disciples to understand?
4. In Luke 6:28, Jesus teaches His disciples to “pray for those who abuse you”. Considering the division in today’s world, give examples where you see this happening. How is it possible to pray for those who wrong you?
5. Just before choosing the apostles, Luke 6:12 (ESV) says:
“In these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and all night He continued in prayer to God.”
How does Jesus model His reliance on prayer?
6. Read Matthew 6:5-8 and Luke 5:16. What can we learn from these passages about nurturing a habit of prayer?
7. In Colossians 4:12 we read:
“Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.”
Why do you think Paul considered it important to include this passage in his letter to the Colossians?

Questions for Application:

1. What does the phrase “praying with confidence” mean to you?

2. Share, as you are willing, some of the boldest prayers you have prayed. Jesus demonstrated how to pray God's will and not our own. How does Jesus' example impact your own bold prayers?

3. Share, as you are willing, an example of a time when you have felt the power of others praying for you or for someone you love?

4. As a community of believers, we often use the phrase "praying the scripture". What specific scriptures do you turn to when you struggle with prayer?

5. What does Christ's prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane teach us about praying?

6. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-3. What are the benefits of the instructions on prayer that Paul gives to Timothy?

7. Paul and the Philippians had a partnership in which they were very supportive of each other, and it led to much joy between them. How can we as a church (or a small support group) be supportive of each other?

Resources: *Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic.*

Prayers from Prison: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/28842-prayers-from-prison>

Pray First: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/35563-pray-first>

Question for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, and service?

Growth Challenge:

Each day this week, offer up a prayer focused on a different aspect of Marion Methodist (e.g. pastoral staff, outreach ministries, youth ministry, children's & adult education, etc.)

NOTES

March 19 | Presence

Before you begin this Growth Group session, read the meditation found on the inside cover of your Growth Group materials.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.



At Marion Methodist, we have identified markers/measures to

demonstrate our love for God and to nurture and develop people in their relationships with God and others. These Marks of a Disciple: prayers, presence, gifts, witness, and service offer a scaffold upon which to build as we carry out our mission. ***The mission of the Church is to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*** This information can easily be found on the Marion Methodist web site, but how do we know if we are effectively demonstrating the Marks of a Disciple? We don't have to guess, and we don't have to compare our "Marks" to those of other church family members. The life of Jesus is THE example of a disciple.



Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.
Philippians 3:12

Jesus is the ultimate example when considering how we should love others with our presence. As Christians, we show up and offer nurturing and love even in

difficult circumstances. In John 18:2-8, Jesus is found to be in the Garden of Gethsemane as He is betrayed. Not only soldiers, but also officials from the chief priests and Pharisees sought Jesus to arrest Him. Jesus' proclamation of, "I am He" drew negative attention away from the disciples and pointed to His deity. Jesus demonstrates unselfish love as He stands firm in the chaos. Because of Jesus, we can also have "staying power" to minister with our presence, even in the face of difficulties.

Because of Jesus, we have "staying power" to minister with our presence.

Paul's letter to the Philippians teaches much about genuine Christianity and helps the reader understand what it means to be Christlike. The presence of Paul, his dedication to the people to whom he ministered, and his sense of responsibility to preach the Gospel, clearly demonstrates his dependence on Christ. In Philippians 3:15-21, Paul calls the Philippians to imitate him as a mature Christian, and he encourages them to live correctly before God reminding them their citizenship is in heaven. Paul does not claim to be perfect but an imitator of Christ.

Scripture: Philippians 3:15-21, John 18:2-8

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?

2. What challenged you about this sermon?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. As you consider Paul's message in Philippians 3:15-21, explain the difference between confident assurance and arrogance. Why can Paul have confidence as he exhorts the Philippians?
2. Explain the powerful significance of Jesus' words, "*I am He*" in John 18: 5-8. When Jesus is arrested, He tells the soldiers, "*Let these men go*" (referring to the disciples). Why is Jesus protecting them?
3. John 8:2 tells us that Judas led soldiers and officials to the Garden of Gethsemane. Furthermore, they were carrying torches, lanterns, and weapons. What impression are they making as they approach Jesus? How does Jesus react as they arrive?
4. Read Job 2:11-13. What can we learn about being present for others from this passage?
5. Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. How does this passage relate to the idea of presence?
6. Read Luke 18:11-16 and Matthew 8:5-13. What does Jesus teach us in these passages about being present for people who are different than us?

Questions for Application:

1. Describe a time you have felt ill-equipped and hesitant to minister to someone with your presence. How does knowing Jesus increase your “staying power”?
2. Describe ways that you personally minister to others with your presence.
3. As Christians, we are instructed to learn from others. Jesus commanded us to “go and make disciples of all nations”. Paul told us to learn from each other by keeping “*eyes on those who live as we do*”. In your life, who are you paying attention to and what impact are they making on your life?
4. Paul warns the Philippians that there are many enemies of Jesus because “*their mind is set on earthly things*”. What can we do to keep us from becoming like these enemies of the cross of Christ?
5. If you can, share an experience when you relied on the presence of others to make it through a difficult time.
6. In what ways does your presence model Christ-like behavior as modeled by Paul?

Resources: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

Presence and Power: <https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/33383-presence-power>

The People of God and the God of the People: <https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/16852-the-people-of-god-and-the-god-of-the-people>

Additional Resources

Bible Project Philippians: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/philippians/>

Bible Project John: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/john/>

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?
2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

Commit to praying that your eyes will be opened to someone who would be blessed by the ministry of your presence and reach out to connect with that individual. Consider sending a card, making a call, or arranging a personal visit.

NOTES

March 26 | Witness

Before you begin this Growth Group session, read the meditation found on the inside cover of your Growth Group materials.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

Just before He ascended into Heaven, Jesus gave vital instructions to His disciples. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* (Acts 1:8). Not only did Jesus promise the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples as they witnessed, but He had already demonstrated



But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
Acts 1:8

exactly what it looked like to be a witness for God. Jesus only did what His Father told Him to do. So Jesus said, *“When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.* (John 8:28). Jesus didn't just talk the talk; He walked the walk, and in doing so, He has shown us exactly how to be an effective witness for God.

In John 18:33-36, Jesus knew He was going to be crucified, however He boldly spoke the truth of who He is even as He faced a sure death. Modeling the importance of sharing our witness even during life's extreme struggles, Jesus demonstrates that following Him comes at a cost, but also that our strongest witness can spring from some of our most difficult times of trial.

Paul, an imitator of Christ, shares a strong witness in Philippians 1:18-22 when he insists that his imprisonment is meant to advance the Gospel, and he rejoices that Christ is proclaimed. He rejoices that in his life and/or his death, Jesus will be honored. Paul's witness proclaims hope in dire circumstances.

Our own witness can be ineffective if our words and our lives don't match. *“Biblical faith is not just about what you believe: it's about what you do.”* Kristi McLelland In other words, we can't preach Jesus if we don't live Jesus.

Scripture: Genesis 21:9-21, Philippians 1:18-21, John 18:33-37

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?



We can't preach Jesus if we don't live Jesus.

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. The Greek word for witnesses in verse 1 is *martys* or martyrs. Discuss the actions of early Christians. How does the use of witness in this passage emphasize the fact that following Jesus comes at a cost and the most effective witness can often be the result of extreme difficulty?
2. Read Acts 1:8. What did Jesus mean when He said, “*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you...*”?
3. Pilate seemed confused when Jesus was brought to him and asked, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Why would Pilate be confused when he met Jesus?
4. Paul tells the Philippians that “*to live is Christ and to die is gain*”. What did he mean by this?
5. Read Philippians 1:22-26. Why does Paul choose to remain present for the church in Philippi?
6. Read John 5:19. How does Jesus witness to God the Father through His life and ministry? What are we to learn from this witness?

Questions for Application:

1. Consider these words of Timothy Keller. “*In the end, we love people into belief. We do not argue them into belief.*” When thinking about how you share Jesus with others, do you feel your witness is centered in love? Explain.

2. In Kristi McLelland's study, *Gospel on the Ground*, the author shares that early disciples didn't just want to know what their rabbi knew; they wanted to be just like their rabbi. As a disciple of Jesus, how does your life directly reflect Him?

3. When Pilate was questioning Jesus about being a king, Jesus replies that "*The reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth*". If someone has questions for you about Jesus, how do you share this truth?

4. Paul is in prison while writing to the Philippians, yet he has a sense of joy about his circumstances. Have you seen the Lord during difficult times in your life? Describe how the Lord has brought you joy during difficult times.

5. Paul modeled his life and ministry after that of Jesus. Do you have a role model for your life? If you do, how does this affect your daily living?

6. Saint Francis told believers to "*Preach the Gospel at all times; when necessary, use words*". In what ways does your daily living "*preach the Gospel*"? Are there things you need to change to better do as Saint Francis instructed?

Resources: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic.

Spiritual Disciplines and Evangelism: <https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/11238-spiritual-disciples-evangelism>

To Be a Witness, a Lifestyle: <https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/30274-to-be-a-witness-a-lifestyle>

Additional Resource

Bible Project Philippians: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/philippians/>

Bible Project John: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/john/>

Question for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, and service?

Growth Challenge:

Describe a time you boldly and publicly took a stand for Jesus (or observed someone else do the same) even if the circumstances were difficult.

NOTES

April 2 | Gifts

Before you begin this Growth Group session, read the meditation found on the inside cover of your Growth Group materials.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

In this series we are looking at examples of the marks of a disciple that Jesus modeled during the time He lived among us. This week we look at what Jesus did to model giving for us.



*Freely you have received,
freely give.*



*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."
John 1:29*

If you've been in the church long enough, you've probably heard phrases like "not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice", or "sacrificial giving." As we look at the actions of Jesus during this season of Lent, we see His perfect gifts. His gift to God was us. We were to be a fragrant offering, a gift that was pleasing to the Lord. But we are a sinful people, "*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" (Romans 3:23) Before we could be presented to God, atonement had to be made for our sins. In the time of Jesus, the required offering for the atonement of sin was a lamb without blemish or defect. Scripture tells us that Jesus was the perfect Lamb of God, "*a lamb without blemish or defect.*" (1 Peter 1:19) His sacrificial gift for us was Himself. To present us to God, He gave His life as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Your sins. My sins. The sins of the world. Is there a greater example of sacrificial giving in the history of the world?

Scripture: Philippians 4:10-20, Luke 23:44-47

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Philippians 4:13 is a coffee mug scripture. How does this verse apply to modeling the life of Christ and using our personal gifts to grow God's kingdom?
2. In Paul's letter to the Philippians, he tells them that "*I have learned the secret of being content.*" What is his secret?
3. Read John 1:29. Why do you think John called Jesus the Lamb of God?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 8:9. What do you think Paul meant when he said that for our sakes, Jesus "*became poor*"? How did Jesus' poverty make us rich?
5. In Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus warns about giving gifts to the church without reconciliation. Explain the meaning of this passage as it relates to our attitude toward giving.
6. What is the lesson Jesus wants to teach about giving when He shares details about the gifts of two women: the first in Mark 12:41-44 and the second in Mark 14:3-9?
7. As Jesus died on the cross, the veil in the temple that led to the Holy of Holies was torn in two. What did the tearing of the veil signify?

Questions for Application:

1. How would you describe to a non-believer what the death of Jesus is all about? What difference does His death make in a believer's life?

2. When thinking about your gifting, do you pause to consider the gifts of Jesus?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 8:10-15. In what ways might this advice from Paul influence your giving?

4. Discuss what sacrificial giving means to you and give examples of sacrificial gifts you have given and/or received.

5. Gifts do not have to be extravagant or even tangible to be precious. Consider some of the most precious gifts you've given or received in life and share those with your group.

6. Paul thanks the Philippians for their gifts and tells them "what I desire is that more be credit to your account." How can we give credit to others for the gifts that we've received?

Resources: *Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic*

The Great Surrender: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/17339-the-great-surrender>

Giving is Gaining | Living a Generous Life: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/25090-giving-is-gaining-living-a-generous-life>

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

Consider your pattern of giving. Does it properly represent your gratitude to God for what you have been given? If it doesn't, consider implementing a plan to bring them into alignment.

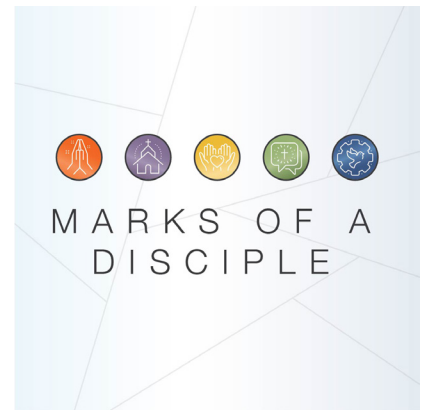
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April 9 | We Are Sent

Before you begin this Growth Group session, read the meditation found on the inside cover of your Growth Group materials.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.



“Christ the Lord is risen today.” These words of the familiar Easter hymn often sound in my head as I think about Easter morning and the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. But Christ did much more than just rise from the dead, like the grand finale of a magic show. He rose with power, promise, and purpose. When the risen Lord appeared before His disciples and followers, He demonstrated that He had power over death. He showed them, and the world, that His promise of eternal life for all who accept Him as Lord and Savior was not just empty words. His purpose was to bring the love of God to the people of God. And He fulfilled His purpose when He passed it on to all those who follow Him. We, as followers of Christ, are called to take the love of God to all the nations and peoples of the world.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, Matthew 28:19a



The King is Risen and we are sent!

Throughout His public ministry, Jesus demonstrated to us how to share the love of God to the people we encounter. His focus on the least, the last and the lost showed us that everyone matters, that all are precious in the eyes of God. Yes, we are called to make disciples, but to do that we must first show people that we care about them, because God cares about them. Sometimes the task we’ve been given seems daunting and the obstacles insurmountable. But Jesus showed us that it is as simple as showing compassion, love, and mercy. Or as the prophet Micah put it centuries earlier: “*He has shown you, oh mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*” (Micah 6:8) When we do this, we are well on our way to obeying the great commission.

Scripture: John 20:16:21, Matthew 28:16:20

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?

2. What challenged you about this sermon?

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Read Matthew 28:19-20 and Micah 6:8. Do you see a connection between these two passages? Why or why not.
2. Read John 20:16-17. How does this passage relate to the sermon theme that we are sent?
3. How does Mathew 16:24 and Mark 10:45 instruct us as we seek to serve God?
4. In John 20:17, Jesus refers to the disciples as His brothers for the first time. What is the significance of this?
5. Christ gave the Great Commission which talks about making disciples, baptizing them and teaching them. What is the importance of each of these three steps?
6. Not only does Jesus send us out, but He empowers us to be effective as His disciples. How does Acts 1:8 affirm this?

Questions for Application:

1. Has there been a time when you felt a personal call to go (somewhere) and do (something) for God? How did you respond?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. What was Paul's approach to presenting the Gospel to people from different cultures with different backgrounds? What can you learn from his example?

3. Jesus appears to the disciples after they found the tomb empty, assuring them that He had defeated death. How can we find this same assurance? Reference John 20:30-31.

4. Jesus said to "*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*" What does this tell us about the kind of church that He wants Marion Methodist to be?

5. Identify ways that your life, or the life of someone you know, has reflected Micah 6:8.

6. Often, we are called to serve in ways that we feel ill-equipped to serve. How does the life of Jesus and the Holy Spirit empower you to step out in faith and "*make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*"?

Resources: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

Being a Part in the Great Commission: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/29378-being-a-part-in-the-great-commission>

Motivation for the Great Commission: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/18651-motivation-for-the-great-commission>

Questions for Discussion:

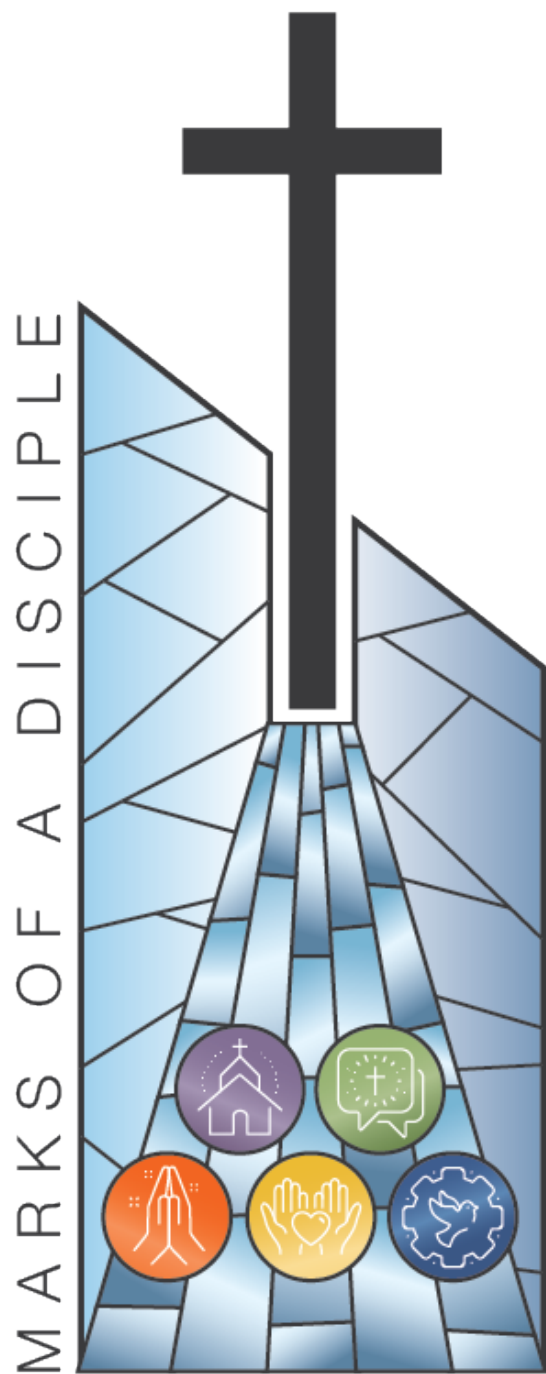
1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

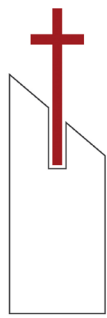
Growth Challenge:

If you are not currently involved in an outreach program, look for opportunities to become involved. If unsure where to begin, talk with a trusted spiritual advisor.

NOTES



MARKS OF A DISCIPLE



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