

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

So many of us, if asked, would say that we are definitely ALL IN on following Jesus, and yet many of us find ourselves in the same position as the ruler and the disciples when we hear the words of Jesus: we're challenged by the drastic difference between FINDING Jesus and FOLLOWING Him. Here are a few of the things that we can learn in this passage about the cost of following Jesus:

- 1. The difference between finding and following is the difference between hearing and doing.** Hebrews 4:12 is a verse that we quote a lot about how powerful the Word of God is, but verse 13 is one that we don't say as much because it reveals a very uncomfortable side of the Word's power: exposure. Jesus has a way of speaking with authority in a way that would expose the true heart of those who were listening and we see it in his interaction with the rich ruler. He heard Jesus clearly but wasn't willing to obey Jesus completely, and as a result he didn't follow. Obedience to God's Word – no matter how hard it may seem - is what marks us as followers instead of just finders.
- 2. The payback is greater than the payout.** When Jesus told the disciples it was hard for the rich to be saved, they were a little confused because in their culture, people believed that wealth was a sign of God's love. If HE couldn't be saved, then WHO could be saved?? It's a fair question, and Jesus points them back to a faithful God Who saves and rewards those who follow.
- 3. We can because He has and He will.** In investing, past performance isn't a guarantee of future results. But it is with God! His past faithfulness IS a guarantee of His future faithfulness! Our responsibility is to simply step out based on what He has done and will do and not based on what we haven't done and may not do! Isaiah 43 is a wonderful chapter about God faithfully leading the unfaithful nation of Israel and we can trust that He will do the same with us.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- Paul made the statement that finding Jesus and following Jesus are 2 different things. What are some of the differences between them (ex: finding Jesus happens once but following Jesus happens over and over again)? What light does 1 John 2:3-4 shine on the difference?
- Read Matthew 16:24. What are some of the crosses that we may have to take up as we follow?
- If we're content with only finding Jesus, we'll never develop the courage to follow Jesus. Read James 1:2-4 and discuss how God develops courage as we follow Him.
- We can follow God because He has been faithful and He will be faithful! What are some of the ways that you've seen God's faithfulness in the past? How can that help you trust Him as you follow Him in the future?
- Who do we have to help us as we follow Jesus into the unknown (Read John 14:26 to find out)? How does the Holy Spirit teach us what we need to know (check out John 15:5-8!)?