

Session 3: Making disciples of Jesus Christ – Members' Handout

Vision Prayer: (3 minutes)



Heavenly Father,
we embrace Your call for us to make disciples,
to be witnesses and to grow leaders.
Give us the eyes to see Your vision,
ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit
and courage to follow in the footsteps of Your Son,
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Getting Started: (7 minutes)



Looking at the picture on page 2, which vehicle best represents where you are on your faith journey?

Talk in threes about your journey to becoming a follower of Jesus.

- Were there key people who helped you?
- Did it take a long time or did everything move very quickly?

Bible Passage: Mark 8:34-38 (10 minutes)



³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷ Or

what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.'

Option 1

Jesus presents some tough teaching on Christian discipleship. In what ways have you grown as a disciple over the last 5 years? In what ways might we need to deny ourselves so that more of Christ can live in us? Can you identify any particular areas of your life where Jesus might need to be at work?

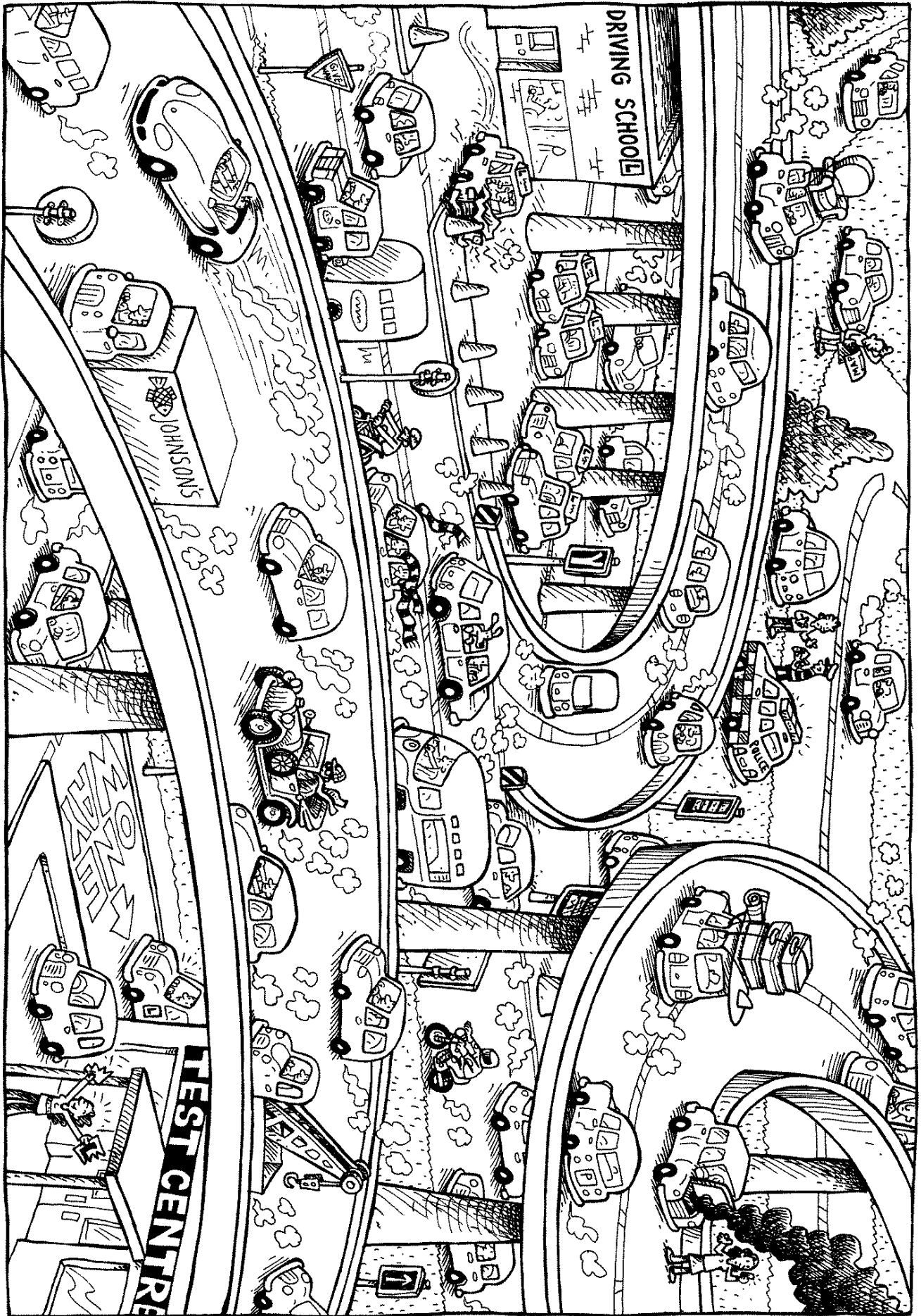
Option 2

Jesus does not hold back in teaching His disciples the level of commitment He requires.

1. What does He mean by 'take up his cross' and 'lose his life'? Is this over the top?
2. From Mark's account, how necessary is this level of commitment?
3. Discuss the implications of teaching this level of discipleship in our churches as normal for the Christian.

DVD Teaching Input:





Growing in God:



Just as seeds need good soil, water, light and the 'right' conditions to encourage germination and growth, so too our life with God can be nurtured by creating the right conditions for growth. Ultimately, nurturing our relationship with God is like any other relationship; it flourishes through spending quality time with God. The list on page 4 includes some of the things that people find helpful in growing as a disciple. Fill in parts of the chart to describe your own ways of growing in God. What's going well? What could improve? What could you try? What doesn't work for you? Simply tick the box or make a note. You don't need to do all these and there is space to add your own ideas.

When you have had some time filling in the chart you might like to share your responses in pairs.

As you talk it would be helpful if you could identify some things that the church could take responsibility for doing to help people grow in their faith. You could put your suggestions in this box.

Activity	I am doing ...	I could do this ...
Regular worship with others		
Bible Study (on your own)		
Bible Study (with other people)		
Private/personal prayer		
Praying at start/end of day. Giving the day to God and ending the day with God		
Setting aside a special time of the day to pray		
Praying with other people		
Special times (retreats or quiet days, Christian celebrations and/or conferences)		
Going on a pilgrimage		
Talking with a Christian friend		
Spiritual mentor/director		
Walking/being outdoors		
Reading Christian books		
Listening to music		
Listening to Christian music		
Serving/helping other people		
Being involved in Christian Leadership		
Listening to God		
Meeting in small groups		
Having somewhere where we feel close to God		
Keeping a prayer journal		
Other		
Other		
Other		

Money matters:



Jesus seems to indicate that one of the biggest challenges for us is around the issue of money and possessions.

'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'

'No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.'

Matthew 6: 1-4, 19-21, 24-34)

The Bible talks about giving a proportion of your income to God's work. Some groups suggest giving 5% of our income to the church and others recommend following the Bible's teaching about tithing which involves giving 10% of what we have to God. Ultimately we need to decide with God what our level of giving should be. The Bible teaches that our giving to God should be realistic, planned, generous, regular and cheerful. In most churches about 85% of the time, money, energy and prayer is given by about 15% of the people. Why do you think this is?

I will offer up my life:



Giving isn't just about money; it's about offering ourselves totally to God. So as well as money we need to offer our time, talents, energy etc. to God. Underline some of the lyrics from these two hymns that you feel best express this idea.

*I will offer up my life
In spirit and truth,
Pouring out the oil of love
As my worship to You
In surrender I must give my every part;
Lord, receive the sacrifice of a broken heart*

*Chorus:
Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring
To so faithful a friend, to so loving a King?
Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung
As a praise of Your name
For the things You have done?
Oh my words could not tell, not even in part
Of the debt of love that is owed
By this thankful heart*

*You deserve my every breath
For You've paid the great cost;
Giving up Your life to death,
Even death on a cross
You took all my shame away,
There defeated my sin
Opened up the gates of heaven
And have beckoned me in.*

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*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

*From: When I survey the wondrous cross
– Isaac Watts*

In the space below write down some of the things that you feel you could offer to God and his church.

Time

Talents

It would also be a good idea to consider what you are able to give financially to the work of the church.

Our Priorities:



Make a note here of things that will help the congregation grow as disciples. Identify two or three things that you can do in the next year.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

As a leader of the group, make sure these are fed back to the church leadership, PCC and parish priest.

Prayer Reflection:



Slowly read the words of this song together and then pause for prayer which can either be silent or spoken aloud.

Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring

To so faithful a friend, to so loving a King?

Pause and praise Jesus for who he is - his life, his nature and his example

Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung

As a praise of Your name

For the things You have done?

Pause and give thanks for Jesus' death and resurrections

Oh my words could not tell, not even in part

Of the debt of love that is owed

By this thankful heart

Pause and spend a few moments saying thank you to Jesus for the ways he has blessed your life. Pray that you will continue to grow as disciple.

Take it Away Material:



Every time you open your purse or wallet or get change from your pocket think about how much Jesus gave so that he could draw you into a relationship with him. You might like to have a version of 'When I survey the wondrous cross' on your CD player or MP3 player and listen to the hymn at least once every day.