



{INVITATIONS}

LISTEN.

Follow Me

John 1:29-43; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

GETTING STARTED

Not too many years ago the only way to “call” someone was by phone. Share all the ways people “call” one another now.

As you observe culture, your family, or even yourself, how is “listening” changing?

READ AND REFLECT

Read John 1:29-43.

What themes do you see in this passage?

How does the testimony of John connect to the previous section of Scripture in John 1?

“The next day...” is a literary device used by John the Apostle meant to keep these various sections together in John 1. Why do you think John would want these three sections tied together?

What is the significance of John the Baptist’s statement in John 1:29? (Hint: Think Old Testament, Passover, Temple, and Messiah).

Where do you see God’s grace in John 1:29-43?

ENGAGE AND DISCUSS

How would you explain the difference to someone who asked you, “What is the difference between *accepting Jesus into your heart* and *giving Jesus your heart*?”

When Jesus called people to follow him, what happened? (You can think of the John passage above or any passage when Jesus calls people.)

Is “believing in Jesus” too easy today? Explain.

Share how your commitment to following Jesus has impacted your life.

Jesus continues to call us...he continues to extend the invitation to follow him. What would it mean for you, or what would change, if you responded to this call afresh—not with your mind, but with all your heart and life?

NEXT STEPS

Find time this week to sit in quiet and “be” with God. You may need to take several deep breathes to slow yourself down. Don’t talk...simply rest in God.

- When your soul quiets, listen for Jesus’ call to follow him.
- What do you hear?
- How do you feel prompted to respond? (worship, confession, run toward him, hide your face...)
- Listen more deeply as Jesus is calling you...moving toward you.
- Spend the last part of your time talking with Jesus and listening to the Spirit.

Consider sharing with a friend your experience of being with Jesus and responding to his call to follow him.

Listening to God's Word

A Christ Church Soul-Training Resource

Why Study the Bible?

1. Because Jesus did.

Jesus is the Word of God made flesh (John 1:14). Not surprisingly, then, Christ expressed the love of God's Word in every area of his life. He used Scripture to: answer those who tested him, resist temptation, find guidance, encourage his heart, comfort others, explain his actions, and, ultimately, face his own death.

Jesus also made it clear that we were to do likewise – to make his Word foundational to our lives (Matthew 7:7).

2. Because it is so useful.

The Apostle Paul wrote that: *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17)*

The Bible is Divine Revelation. It reveals who God is, what his character is like, and what his desires are for human life and other aspects of his creation. Through Bible study we also gain insights into who we are and why we are here. We learn how to live in a manner that deepens our friendship with God and others and enhances life in many additional ways.

For these reasons, both Old and New Testaments encourage regular study of, meditation on, and memorization of God's Word.

How to Study the Bible?

There are many different ways to mine insights from the Scriptures. Try each of these methods over time and see how God uses them in your life.

1. **The Artist Method:**

Read a passage of Scripture, considering the following three questions as you read...

- a. *What speaks to my heart here?*
Draw a heart beside the word(s) that stir you.
- b. *What new thought or idea comes to me?*
Draw a light bulb beside the new thought or idea.
- c. *What does Scripture move me to do?*
Draw a hand beside the action you want to take.

How can you live into one of your insights today? Share your insights with a friend.

2. The Detective Method:

Read a short narrative passage from one of the gospels. Let the story take shape in your mind's eye...

- a. Imagine the scene and observe all the facts.
Ask the *who, when, where, what* questions.
- b. Once you have the facts, interpret the facts.
Ask the *why* questions. What meaning did the actions or pronouncements have for the characters?
- c. Then, apply your study to your own life.
Ask *how* might all this apply to me? What is the personal "take-away"?

3. The Treasure Seeker Method:

When reading Scripture consider the following application questions...

- a. Is there an *example* here for me to follow?
- b. Is there a *promise* or *attribute of God* to claim?
- c. Is there an *instruction* to obey?
- d. Is there a *truth* to be applied?
- e. Is there a *prayer* here for me to pray?
- f. Is there a *sin* to be confessed?
- g. Is there a *question* God is asking me?

4. The Jesus Student Method:

If you are unfamiliar with Scripture, read the gospel according to Mark or Luke and study to discover all you can about Jesus. Ask yourself the following questions...

- a. What seems important to Jesus?
- b. What sort of questions does Jesus ask people?
- c. What sort of questions do people ask Jesus?
- d. How is Jesus different from other leaders?

What Other Ideas Are Worth Exploring?

1. Experiment with different ways of listening to Scripture.
 - Read the Bible out loud or ask someone else to read a passage to you so you can savor the words.
 - Listen to an audio Bible while driving or exercising.
 - Put a verse on your computer screen saver or post it on a card where you will see it throughout the day.
2. Enhance your understanding of the original context of a particular passage by referencing a Bible commentary or a Bible dictionary. Or go online and type in places, cultures, and people you come across in your Bible study.
3. Visit a Christian bookstore and look through the array of Bible study guides available.
4. Join a Bible study at the church or in your community or begin your own. Greater insight and encouragement often comes from having partners for the journey.