

Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

A Discipleship Journey



God Loves Us Passionately

Week 1

Blessedness: Our Original Gift

This weekly material is offered to support our Discipleship Journey as we walk in the foot prints of Jesus.

We encourage you to use this material as a part of your daily prayer practice as follows:

- ❖ Beginning with the Opening Prayer.
- ❖ Praying with the weekly Reflection.
- ❖ Finishing with the Closing Prayer.

Let us pray for each other, that we are transformed as individuals and as community, by this Discipleship Journey.

If you would like to discuss the materials further, or have any questions, please contact Kelly Lemens at 284-4266.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we praise you. Your love is infinite. You lovingly seek and find each one of us, no matter where we are or what we have done. Forgive us for the times we've doubted or failed to be moved by your love for us. In your Scripture you tell us, "As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love." (John 15:9) Thank you for loving each of us personally and deeply, and inviting us to live in your love. Help us to know, not just with our head but with our whole being, that you love us. Lord, help us to allow your love for us to transform everything. Jesus we trust in you. We make this prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN

Reflection

If you are like most of us, you wear many “hats”: parent, sibling, child, friend, employee, student, volunteer...the list goes on and on. Over time, these roles become part of our identity and shape how we see ourselves and our unique place in the world. As Christians, though, we all have one fundamental baptismal identity: *we are disciples of Jesus Christ.*

What is a disciple? In a nutshell, a disciple is one that walks in the footsteps of Jesus. Just as a child places their small foot into the larger footprint of their parent trying to mimic their way, a disciple entrusts their very selves in the person of Jesus Christ and strives to be like Christ more and more every day. This, of course, is the journey of a lifetime. This is the journey you are embarking on today.

What are the different “hats” you wear?

How would your best friend, when talking about you, complete the following sentence: “I know that my friend (fill in your name) is a disciple of Jesus because he/she: _____.”

Discipleship itself is an identity that we discover, embrace and grow into over time. But we can clearly identify qualities and attributes that all disciples live out. This is where we will begin our journey, with the end in mind. As we grow in discipleship, so will these qualities and attributes grow more apparent in us. Jesus describes these attributes in His Sermon on the Mount, beginning with the Beatitudes. Each month, we will reflect on one of the 8 Beatitudes to gain a deeper understanding of their meaning for our lives.

Each of the 8 Beatitudes begins with *Blessed*:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessedness exists at the center of our being.

God said, “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness.”

Genesis 1:26

We were created in the “image” of God. Each of us is created with this image in our soul. “It is the Holy Spirit poured into your heart, and it has been given to you.” (Romans 5:5) This “beingness” precedes all doing – I am loved before I do anything right or wrong, worthy or unworthy. This is our “original blessing.”

When we embrace our own blessedness, actually sink into being a beloved child of God, we are then able to truly live out the purpose for which we are made. We were created by a loving God to *be love* in the world; our core is original blessing, our very being is “very good.” (Genesis 1:31) Living out of this place of blessedness, we will effortlessly embody the beatitudes and naturally walk in the footprints of Christ.

When have you experienced your own blessedness?

What was that like?

Take a few minutes of quiet and sink into being a beloved child of God.

Closing Prayer

GOD WOULD KNEEL DOWN

I think God might be a little prejudiced.
For once He asked me to join Him on a walk
through this world,

and we gazed into every heart on this earth,
and I noticed He lingered a bit longer
before any face that was
weeping,

and before any eyes that were
laughing.

And sometimes when we passed
a soul in worship

God too would kneel
down.

I have come to learn: God
adores His
creation.

St. Francis of Assisi