

SMALL GROUPS & DISCIPLESHIP

Learning to hear from God and obey God >> Slowing down in order to catch up to God

THE MAIN FOCUS OF JESUS' LIFE AND MINISTRY WAS TO ANNOUNCE THE AVAILABILITY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD (MARK 1:15).

JESUS WANTED HIS DISCIPLES TO BE CAPTURED BY HOW WONDERFUL GOD'S KINGDOM IS AND HOW BREATHTAKINGLY GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL GOD IS.

Our vision of God and His Kingdom is not only that we know where we go when we die, it's a vision of our lives being transformed, becoming more and more like Jesus (2 Cor. 3:18). How does this work in our lives? The pathway that God uses to bring about transformation in us is obedience. Learning to hear from God and obey God is part of the very heart of discipleship – Jesus said teach them to obey.

- *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore 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**. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28: 18-20)*
- *"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will **teach you all things** and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (John 14:26)*
- *Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will **obey my teaching**. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. (John 14:23)*
- *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says**. (James 1:22)*
- *And this is love: that we **walk in obedience to his commands**. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love. (2 John 1:6)*

WHAT'S THIS GOT TO DO WITH SMALL GROUPS?

We want to slow the process down, (some of the same questions over a longer period of time) because it takes time and courage to identify where God might be at work and then to join Him (leading to obedience). A Small Group is a great place to do this.

The Small Group Discussion Guide includes questions directly related to the message / Bible passage as well as some repeated questions that are more personal in nature (but still Bible-centred).

Discipleship is a life long journey, where we are trusting in the slow work of God. But it's not just about time - it's also about learning 'obedience'. If I we find it hard to identify where God is at work, this is more than likely the place to start. When it's getting hard and uncomfortable, it doesn't mean that God isn't in it - it may often be hard and uncomfortable!