

DISCIPLES ARE ORDINARY PEOPLE

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: LIVING IN PURSUIT / SERIES: DISCIPLE

BIG TRUTH: DISCIPLES ARE ORDINARY PEOPLE

Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 10:38-42; John 20:24-29; Acts 8:29-31; 2 Timothy 1:5

BIBLE VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-27

"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong."

BIG IDEAS

- The people who followed Jesus were unremarkably normal.
- The people who followed Jesus struggled with faith.
- The people who followed Jesus saw Him as the only source of life.

BIBLE PASSAGE: LUKE 6:12-16; JOHN 6:66-69

TRANSFORM - LIVING IN PURSUIT

In High School, the Transform Year is an exploration of what it looks like to have transformed influence as we seek to live for a Kingdom that is greater than our own. First, we recognize that we will never be transformed if we are not Living for Jesus. To do this, we must first know who Jesus is by looking at who He says He is (John 8:58), and then look at what the Bible says about how in Him, we live by faith (James 1:6). Next, we recognize that to have transformed influence means that we must live as disciples in pursuit of Christ and His Kingdom over ourselves and our own kingdoms.

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- Jesus is the only source of life
- God's Word is authoritative and applicable for all of life
- To follow Jesus is to pursue a life of sacrifice and surrender



Every student should feel...

- Thankful for the triune God who is worthy
- Convicted of how deception has led them to disobedience
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone



Every student should strive to...

- Read through the gospel of John
- Memorize the Bible verse each week
- Implement regular rhythms of prayer and fasting throughout the semester



Every student should want to...

- Pursue obedience even when faith is a struggle
- Grow in living in step with the Holy Spirit
- Live their lives to glorify God the Father

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong."

The people God calls to follow Him are regular people.

"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth."

- It's easy to think that the people God uses are of superhero status, or that they have special abilities or powers that most people do not have. What is really true is that God uses regular men and women to do His work. He chooses regular, ordinary people to be His people. When Jesus chose His first disciples, He chose the least likely men to be His people.
- He went to the seaside to find the fishermen and the working men. He didn't enter into the temple to find the highly educated men. He chose ordinary people to be His servants. All people God calls to follow Him are regular people. We are all human beings in need of a Savior.

God's call on a disciple's life is extraordinary.

"But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong."

- What makes a disciple of God extraordinary isn't their own personal achievements. It's the call of God on their lives. It's that the God of the universe has chosen them and awakened them to His truth, calling them to Himself. This redemption is what sets them apart from the rest of the world.
- God doesn't choose according to the world's standards. He picks those that the world would not choose. He chooses those that the world would cast off or ignore because it is His power and His glory that shines through His disciples making them extraordinary. He doesn't have to choose the most powerful men and women on earth because He is the most powerful of all beings. He doesn't have the greatest and best follow Him because He Himself is the greatest and best. Those who are called by Him are made like Him.

The people God chooses understand that it is God who is great, not them.

"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth."

- Paul asks his readers and listeners to consider their own call to be God's disciple. When they think about their own position prior to God calling them to Himself, they understand that it is God who is great, not them. True disciples of God understand this.
- When we consider our own position prior to knowing Christ, we know that we are just regular people that God is choosing to use. Any good thing we do, we do through and in the power of God working in us through His Spirit.

BIG IDEA #1: THE PEOPLE WHO FOLLOWED JESUS WERE UNREMARKABLY NORMAL.¹**[THIS]**

God is a remarkable God who knows all and chooses according to His great wisdom, understanding, and sovereignty. When we read accounts of early followers of Christ, we might be tempted to believe that they had a faith that was greater than ours or bigger than anything we could ever have. We could believe that they were unique or had some special talent that set them apart. It can be easy for us to forget that they were actually ordinary men and women just like we are. Many of Christ's followers were never mentioned by name in Scripture, yet we know they existed, living their earthly lives faithfully for Him. 2 Timothy 1:5 mentions two women we know little about, Lois and Eunice, yet we see the effects of their faith in the life of Timothy, whom we know a great deal about. Additionally, we read stories of people like the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:29-31, who heard the gospel, believed it and returned to his homeland. Scripture doesn't mention him again, but from history, we know the gospel reached Ethiopia. God calls His people to follow Him and the people He calls are regular people who have been redeemed by a remarkable God.

[THEREFORE]

Read Luke 10:38-42. God calls ordinary people to follow Him. How does His choice of Mary and Martha reveal this truth about Him?

What is remarkable about this story is how ordinary the interaction between Mary and Martha is. They are sisters who get annoyed at one another like sisters do, yet they are followers of Christ. God's people are all just sinners He has washed clean and made His own. Mary and Martha were two women who were redeemed by Christ. That is what set them apart.

[THIS]

It would be easy to excuse ourselves from following Jesus because we think we aren't extraordinary enough, but this would be a mistake. We are all humans and all sinners. We are all normal and ordinary. It is God who does the remarkable work of awakening sinners to His truth and calling them to Himself. When we realize that there is nothing extraordinary about us, but it is God's calling that is extraordinary, then we have begun to understand the real truth about Him and ourselves. The power and presence that makes someone's life extraordinary is God. He takes regular people and uses them to fulfill His purposes on this earth. There is nothing ordinary about this.

[THEREFORE]

What are some ways you've seen God use regular people in extraordinary ways in His church?

In Acts 3:1-9, we see a picture of Peter and John healing a lame man. They do so in the power and name of Jesus, not in their own power. God uses human men and women for His purposes. Later in Acts 3:16, we see that Peter and John say that this power is from Jesus and not from them. God still does extraordinary things in His church through ordinary people.

How are you encouraged to serve more faithfully knowing God uses regular people?

God does marvelous things through His people when they are faithful to Him. Matthew 21:21 and Romans 15:18-19 help us see that when we trust Him and obey Him, He uses us for His glory and our good.

1. Luke 6:12-16: Jesus' first disciples were untrained, ordinary men. They were regular working men.

BIG IDEA #2: THE PEOPLE WHO FOLLOWED JESUS STRUGGLED WITH FAITH.²**[THIS]**

All of God's people are regular people and they all face the struggle of following Him while living in this fallen and broken world. Jesus' disciples struggled in their faith. Matthew 26:69-75 shows us that even Peter, who was bold and a leader, experienced a crisis when he denied Jesus three times. Peter's denial that he knew Jesus teaches us a lot about what it means to follow Christ. Peter, who was fierce and bold, dealt with the same fears and struggles that we all face at times. Out of fear, he denied being a follower of Christ, revealing just how ordinarily human he was. We face the same struggle and are also faced with the same decision to acknowledge Christ or deny Him. Peter struggled to stand up for Christ when Christ was at His lowest and Peter was supposed to be a close friend of Christ's. When we read this story, we should see that all people who follow Jesus face this same struggle because we are all sinful humans.

[THEREFORE]

How has fear played a part in keeping you from living fully for Jesus at times?

We are more like Peter than we know sometimes. Fear keeps us from living for Jesus. 1 Timothy 1:7 reminds us that God's Spirit isn't a Spirit of fear, but of boldness. Psalm 34:4 and 56:3 tells us that God is our refuge and will calm our fears when we have them.

[THIS]

After Jesus' death and resurrection, His disciple, Thomas doubted He had truly risen from the grave. Thomas was Jesus' chosen disciple, yet he doubted Jesus' power to rise from the dead. Thomas' doubt wasn't a lack of faith in Jesus' saving power. He doubted that Jesus was truly risen from the dead. God's people are humans with human natures. Our understanding is limited, and, in our limitedness, our faith can be challenged. Just like Jesus' disciples struggled at times with their faith, we struggle with ours. Also like His disciples, we can trust that He holds us and carries us through the times we struggle. As we struggle, we work out our salvation and grow in our knowledge of Him. Peter and Thomas emerged on the other side of their doubts stronger and surer of what they believed. They served Jesus faithfully and steadfastly.

[THEREFORE]

How is a struggle with faith seen as a negative thing? How does this keep you from overcoming that struggle?

Jesus gave instruction to His people about anxiety and fear. We know that fear and anxiety are part of the human condition and when we turn to Him, we can overcome them. We should not allow ourselves to turn to guilt and shame, but to God instead as Psalm 55:22 and John 14:1 teach us.

How has a recent struggle with your faith made you more certain of what you believe?

Often, when we struggle in this life, it increases our faith in Christ. As we trust in God and do not lean on our own understanding as Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us, our faith grows. As we see God's promises play out in our lives, our faith grows. We become more and more certain of who God is and His faithfulness to us as Psalm 16:18 tells us.

2. John 20:27: Even Jesus' followers struggle with their faith. It is part of working out our salvation.

BIG IDEA #3: THE PEOPLE WHO FOLLOWED JESUS SAW HIM AS THE ONLY SOURCE OF LIFE.³**[THIS]**

Jesus' disciples gave up everything to follow Him. They suffered persecution and faced great trials, yet they didn't turn away from Him. They truly believed in Him. They understood who He is and they believed in the salvation He offered. In Mark 8:27-29, we see that when they were asked who He was, they knew He was the Christ. People who follow Jesus know He is the Savior. To say Jesus is the Christ is to say He is the One sent by God to save the world from its sin. Jesus' followers know this and hold fast to this truth. His disciples know that He is the promised One and that there is salvation in no one else. Only Jesus can save a person from their sin. His early disciples knew this and sacrificed their lives to tell others this truth. As we follow Jesus, we know this truth and make this truth the center of our lives. It drives us to make all we do and say about Jesus because He has rescued us from our sin debt, giving us new life.

[THEREFORE]

Read Mark 8:27-29. How does knowing Jesus is the Christ lead a person to follow Him?

Jesus is the source of all things. He gives life and gives eternal life. When a person has saving faith, they understand that Jesus is the promised Savior. They know He is the Christ. Knowing He is the Christ leads a person to follow Him because receiving salvation requires turning away from our old life and turning to new life in Jesus.

[THIS]

John 6:66-69 gives us a beautiful picture of the heart of Jesus' disciples. Many people had followed Jesus at different times during His earthly ministry. They had listened to His sermons as He traveled, healing and teaching. Many people who had followed Him turned away from Him when His teaching became too hard for them to bear. When His teaching challenged them more than they wanted, they turned away from following Him. Jesus turned to His original disciples and asked if they, too, wanted to turn away with the others. Peter responded by saying they had nowhere else to go. He didn't mean that they had no other physical place to go. He meant that Jesus is life and the only source of eternal life. Where else would they go to receive salvation and eternal life? People who follow Jesus feel the same as Peter. There is nowhere else to go. There is no one else to go to. There is no option of turning away from Jesus if they desire to live because Jesus is the only source of life.

[THEREFORE]

How have you been tempted to turn away when following Jesus was challenging?

James 1:14 says we are tempted by our desires. When it is challenging following Jesus, we will be tempted to turn away from Him. 1 Corinthians 10:13 teaches us that we are tempted to turn away and sin, but God helps us and keeps us.

How has the knowledge that Jesus is the only source of life held you fast?

Jesus is the only way to have true life. When we live in this knowledge, we understand that there is no other way to have life and we remain steadfast. Romans 6:23 and John 6:35 remind us that life is found in Jesus. This knowledge will carry us through even the most difficult of times.

3. John 6:66-69: Jesus' disciples knew that there was no eternal life found in anyone other than Jesus. They would not and could not leave Him.