

LEADERTREKS **SERMON SERIES****MARK OF A DISCIPLE**

Disciples of Christ make every effort to grow in their faith.

SCRIPTURE

2 PETER 1:3–15

SERMON OVERVIEW

Today, we are starting the first lesson in our Follow Christ series and focusing on growth in our relationship with God. A Christ-centered life is one that is in continual communion with God, so we must make every effort to grow in our faith in him. While we are called to pursue God, it's his pursuit of us that grows the relationship.

OPENING**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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GAME AND ICE BREAKER QUESTION

- We recommend **Where Am I?** or another screen game from **Deep Discipleship Games**.
- What's something you should remember but often forget (telephone numbers, when to take out the trash, certain processes or routines)?

MESSAGE

Use the following teaching points and suggested illustrations as a starting point to build your message.

READ 2 PETER 1:3–4**POINT 1: God provides all we need for a godly life**

Once we choose to follow Christ, we aren't left alone to figure out this new life by ourselves. God provides everything we will need for our journey with him.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a **personal story** about a time someone provided the supplies you needed for an event. (Example: camping equipment from your parents or friend, sports equipment from a coach, or maybe notes, pencil, paper, or calculator for an exam.) Talk about how difficult the event would have been without those supplies.

All that God provides comes through the knowledge of Christ. The more we get to know Jesus, the more prepared we will be to live out a life of faith.

READ 2 PETER 1:5-11

POINT 2: There's always room for growth

We are currently and will always be a work in progress as long as we are on this side of eternity. Regardless of how close we move to Christ, there will be opportunities to grow closer to him. You may think you know people who have living for Christ all figured out, but they don't. We are all making "every effort" (v. 5) to grow in our faith.

Faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, and godliness—all these areas offer opportunities for growth. If you feel like you are solid in the realm of Scriptural knowledge, maybe you need to work on your self-control. Or perhaps you are good at keeping yourself in check in the area of self-control, but your faith can be a little wobbly at times. You definitely have strengths. But you certainly have weaknesses, too. Think of those weaknesses as opportunities for growth and areas to move closer to God.

READ 2 PETER 1:12-15

POINT 3: We all need reminding of the truth

On three different occasions in this passage, Peter mentions reminding his readers that they are established in the truth. Sometimes we forget that fact because it doesn't always feel like we are standing firm in the faith. But feelings don't dictate truth.

ILLUSTRATION: Describe how people feel differently toward different temperatures. If you set the thermostat in your youth room to 70 degrees, some of your students would feel cold, and some would feel hot. However, what they felt didn't change the fact that the temperature was 70 degrees. This is because feelings don't dictate truth.

Feelings may come and go, but the truth of God and his Word never change. Remembering that will help us stand firm when we feel like wavering.

CLOSING REFLECTION

Use this prompt to wrap up your message and leave your students with a challenge to apply.

- What aspect of God do you need to be reminded of most often?
- How can his unchanging nature be an encouragement to you today?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Pick a few questions from below to discuss. Close with prayer.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When have you committed to something and then had to continue to choose that thing over something else?
- What has God given you that helps you live a godly life?
- How is a life spent with God different from a life spent following anything else?
- Why is it important that God's Spirit changes us, not our own self-discipline?
- How does knowing God better help us follow him more closely?
- Why do Christ-followers need to remind each other of the basics of their faith?
- How can you help your brothers and sisters in Christ remember what's most important?
- Which of the character traits listed in this passage do you still need the most growth in?
- What do you think it would look like for God to work in your life?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- What habits or rhythms can you adopt to be more aware of God's work in your life?

PRAYER

Close by praying or invite someone to pray for your group.

Use this space to keep track of any prayer requests.

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