

Not a fan

Lesson 2: The Invitation

Opening Prayer

Introductions: Share with the group what's the best thing that happened to you this past week.

Before you start the DVD, ask people: Has your relationship with Jesus changed at all since we met last week?

Watch Lesson 2: The Invitation (DVD title: "Follow Me.") (Space for notes)

Discuss:

1. What do you think about this cinematic approach to Bible Study? Is it hokey or effective? Is the dialogue churchy or realistic?
2. You saw the story of Matthew, the tax collector, dramatized. Now read the story for yourself. Choose three people and have each one read Matthew's story from each of the Gospels: Matthew 9:9-12; Mark 2:14-17; Luke 5:27-32

It's interesting, the story of Matthew can be found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke but it's only Matthew's Gospel that reveals what his profession was. Why do you think Matthew wanted people to know what he did for a living?
3. Was there a time in your life when you were "irreligious?" What was it like being around religious people?
4. What did it take to wake you up to your need for a change in your life, your need for Jesus?
5. When you came to him and to church what response did you expect? What did you receive?

For personal reflection: Are there stains in your life that make it hard for you to say "yes" to Jesus?

Discuss the Sermon

1. Now that you understand Israel's educational system and how a person became a "talmid" (disciple) and who could become one, how has your understanding of Jesus invitation changed?

"If anyone wants to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23

2. What unspoken codes have you encountered in churches? How do they affect you? How did they effect visitors?
3. List the common excuses people have for not following Jesus by being a part of His body, the Church. Are any of them valid? If you did not grow up in the church and did not go to church, whyat reasons did you have for not going to church?
4. How welcoming are we at FPC? Do we have any unwritten codes that keep people from staying? What can we do to become more welcoming of people who are different from us?
5. What's your understanding of salvation by grace? Some people believe, "Once saved, always saved." Is that true? Does being a Christian mean we can do whatever we please and still go to heaven?

Close by praying for God to move in your life and in the life of the church during this series. Also pray for specific needs of those in your group.