

spiritual caffeine

a monthly shot of encouragement and equipping for student leaders



Cadre Ministries

follow & fish:

further study on growing close and being sent

day 1: devoted to being close

Read Mark 3:14 and Jeremiah 30:21–22

Every time I read it, I'm challenged by that question from God: "Who is he who will devote himself to be close to me?" Too often I'm tempted to devote my life to ministry, to writing for the glory of God, or at least something that relates to doing, not being. But the first (and primary!) task of those God calls to be disciples or leaders is that they be close to him. What does it look like to have that devotion to intimacy? What steps can you take in your life to be closer to Jesus?



day 2: wilting branches

Read John 15:4–9

I have a vase of drooping, dried-out roses on my table right now, ready to be thrown in the trash as soon as I get around to it. They were beautiful at one point, but they're pretty useless right now. It doesn't take long for them to wilt once they're cut. That's the lesson Jesus was trying to teach his followers: if we don't stay connected to him, we'll be useless, dying, disconnected... unable to do anything productive. "Apart from me you can do nothing," he said. How connected are you to the Vine, Jesus, right now? Is there anything you're trying to do on your own strength instead?

day 3: obvious changes

Read Acts 4:13

Jesus chose rather poor, unimpressive people to be his disciples. There was nothing exceptional about them, in the minds of others—unschooled fishermen, tax collectors, rebels. But that's why I love this verse: three years of being with Jesus had obviously changed them. Even their enemies took note that they had been with Jesus! When people look at your life, is it obvious to them that you've "been with Jesus"? Why or why not?

day 4: overflow

Read Colossians 3:16–17

Notice how Paul assumes Jesus' "follow and fish" method. First, let the Word of God dwell in you (spend time with Jesus) and then let it naturally overflow into your words when you're around others. Don't be scared by the idea of teaching others; it doesn't mean you have to stand on stage and give a 30-minute message. Just think of one person who might need some encouragement, and make time *today* to share with them one thing God's been teaching you lately.





day 5: a fishing story

Read John 4:1–26

This is one of my favorite conversations of Jesus recorded in Scripture, and it's a great example of "fishing for men" (or in this case, a woman). Not only was she a woman, but this lady was a Samaritan, and one with a shady history. Good Israelite men didn't hang around with the likes of her. But Jesus did. He sat down at a well and started talking to her about something they both had in common: the need for water. As he had opportunity, he began to direct the conversation to spiritual things and to her deeper needs. Notice that he starts by asking a question and takes the time to listen to her, to get to know her story and her

heart. Who is someone you know who needs to hear the good news? Start by asking some good questions and listening—building a relationship. Then watch for opportunities to share the good news of God's love.

day 6: go

Read Matthew 10:5–8

Listen to Jesus' instructions as he first sends his disciples out. Notice that he didn't tell them to host a big gathering and invite lots of people. He didn't tell them to plan a spectacular church outreach program. He told them to go. Go to where the people are who need me, beginning with those who are right around you, and tell them the gospel. But don't just tell them. Connect with them, learn about their needs, and show compassion. Then they'll be ready to listen. We may not all have gifts of healing and performing miracles like Jesus gave those first disciples, but we can all find people with physical and spiritual needs and find ways to build relationships, serve them, and tell them about Jesus. Whom might God be calling you to go and serve?

day 7: multiplication

Read 2 Timothy 2:1–2

This verse is a great example of Jesus' idea of multiplying disciples who make disciples. Paul had poured his life into Timothy, and now he's telling Timothy to invest in others who will disciple others... it's a continuing process! Are you intentionally investing in anyone else right now? If so, are you teaching that person (by example) to in turn disciple others who are younger or newer to the faith... so that they can do the same to others? That's what it means to make disciples!



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