



## ***Followers of Jesus Christ***

### **Series Overview**

Following Christ involves a wholehearted commitment. Disciples become like the Master, learners become like the Teacher. Christianity is not simply a ticket to heaven. No self-serving version of Christianity will bring us to maturity in Christ, allowing the church to minister and serve God, others, and the world. No self-centered version of Christianity will let us enjoy the fullness of Christianity in full-faced relationship with Christ. Answering the call to follow Jesus turns our lives in a different direction. We can't follow unless we go where he leads. This series of small group discussions looks at centering our lives on Christ, weathering the storms of life, going where Jesus goes, caring for others, and focusing on God's grace.



**May 17, 2009**

### **Session Four: Following Christ: Caring for Others**

**Theme:** *God often meets people's needs through his followers.*

**Texts:** Luke 9:10–17; John 6:25–40; James 1:27, 2:14–19

**Summary:** This study challenges us to care about the needs of others as Jesus does. Jesus said, "When you do it for one of the least of my brothers, you do it for me" (Matt. 25:40). Serving others makes us like Christ; by serving others we serve Christ. Serving others is evidence that we are followers who possess the love of God (1 John 3:17-18). The Bible describes the church as the spiritual body of Christ, suggesting that Christ goes where the church goes. In the contemporary world, the spiritual body of Christ, the church, is the only way Christ has to care for people.

### **Ice Breakers**

Can a person be a genuine follower of Christ and not be concerned about others?

Think of an "other" in your life. What does that person most need? Does Christ want you to provide it?

When have you had a special need and had it met by a disciple of Christ? How did you feel?

What did you think of the one who cared for you?

If you were to think about your level of caring for people who are not Christians, what season of life would it be for you? (spring, summer, fall, winter)

## **Bible Study**

What did the disciples think when Jesus asked them to care for the multitude by feeding them?

You've got to be kidding!  
Do you know how much food this is going to take?  
Do you know how much this is going to cost?  
You're asking too much of us.

What did the disciples think when Jesus spoke about being the bread of life?

How can we eat you?  
We get it, but how can you convince people who are hungry?  
You're going to drive people away with this kind of talk.

How is the work of a Christian usually defined?

Preach the gospel to your neighbors  
Attend worship  
Give regularly  
Care for the needy  
Live a pure life

[How does James (1:19-27; 2:14-26; 3:13-18, etc.) define the work of a Christian?]

When people fail to do Christian works, including caring for others, it is because....

They don't have enough time  
They lack faith  
They don't know anyone in need  
They don't think it's important

## **Applying**

On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your own efforts in caring?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate this church on caring?

What are the societal or cultural factors that deter our efforts to demonstrate our care?

What could this church do to increase its level of caring?

What could you personally do to increase your level of caring?

## **Connecting**

Caring for others depends on connections. This week, ask at least one question a day of someone you meet in an effort to find a need you can help with.

Do something caring for someone when they don't expect it.

Find a "caring project" that you or members of your group can work on during the next few months, or during the July recess from small groups.

Try to consistently show your care to someone in trouble in an effort to bring them closer to the Lord.