

**NORTH STELTON AME CHURCH**

Pastor Ritney Castine | Wednesday, 6:30 PM



# Called to Follow

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Our central question**

What does it mean to answer Jesus' call to follow him?

**The central truth**

Jesus calls us into a relationship that reorders our lives and draws us into his mission. A disciple receives God's grace, follows Jesus' direction, grows in his character, and participates in his mission.

**Why this study matters**

God's grace welcomes and forgives us, and the Holy Spirit renews the way we live. As we grow in love, truthfulness, generosity, and courage, our neighbors should experience the fruit of that renewal. These six weeks begin a pattern of lifelong learning, obedience, and service.

**Our Scripture pathway**

Mark 1:14-20: God's kingdom and Jesus' call to follow.

Mark 3:13-15: Being with Jesus and being sent by him.

Ephesians 2:8-10: Saved by grace and created for good works.

**Begin with your own story**

What first drew you to Jesus? How has following him shaped your life?

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As we learn together: listen with care, welcome questions, and share only what you feel comfortable sharing. Encourage one another toward a specific, faithful response.

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## Jesus Calls Us to Follow

**Read Mark 1:14-20 (KJV)**

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

**Understand the setting**

John has been arrested. Jesus announces God's good news in Galilee and meets fishermen at work. Their response affects their livelihoods and family relationships. Mark emphasizes Jesus' initiative and their decisive response.

**Key truths to carry with you**

God's kingdom: God's reign draws near through Jesus.

Repent and believe: Turn from sin toward God and trust his good news.

Follow me: Let Jesus direct your life.

I will make you: Jesus forms his followers for his mission.

Fishers of people: Help others encounter and respond to Christ.

Their particular call involved leaving their nets. Our response may involve greater faithfulness within our existing responsibilities, as well as changes in our priorities.

Reflect: What might Jesus be calling me to release or reorder?

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## With Jesus and Sent by Jesus

### Read Mark 3:13-15 (KJV)

13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

### Understand the setting

Jesus' ministry has drawn crowds and growing opposition. He appoints the Twelve from among his followers. Their number recalls the twelve tribes of Israel. This is a distinct appointment, following the earlier call of the fishermen in Mark 1.

### What the passage teaches

A community: Jesus forms people who learn and serve together.

A relationship: They are appointed to be with him and learn his way.

A mission: They are sent to proclaim and confront evil under his authority.

The Twelve have a particular apostolic commission. Their calling also helps us see how communion with Christ sustains service. Prayer, Scripture, worship, the sacraments, and fellowship help us attend to him.

### Discuss and write

Which practice helps me attend to Jesus? What makes room for that practice difficult?

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Who encourages my growth in faith? How might a discipleship partner or class leader support my next step?

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Mission connection: Where has serving someone deepened my dependence on Christ?

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## Grace Gives Us a New Way to Live

### Read Ephesians 2:8-10 (KJV)

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

### Read the verses in context

Ephesians 2:1-10 moves from our need under sin to God's mercy and new life with Christ. Verses 4-5 locate salvation in God's love. Verses 11-22 extend the picture to Jews and Gentiles reconciled in one body.

### Grace and good works belong together

Grace: God's undeserved favor and saving action.

Faith: The trusting response through which we receive God's gift.

Good works: The fruit and purpose of a life renewed in Christ.

Our works do not purchase God's grace. God creates a people in Christ who can live in ways that express his goodness. We serve in grateful response to what God has done.

### A Wesleyan connection

Prevenient grace: God graciously moves toward us before our response.

Justifying grace: God forgives and reconciles us to himself.

Sanctifying grace: God continues renewing us in holy love.

### Discuss and write

How does receiving God's grace change my motivation for serving?

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What good work is already within my reach this week?

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## My Next Faithful Step

Review your time, relationships, money, work, and service. Ask where Jesus is inviting a concrete response. You may keep these reflections private.

An area of my life that needs Jesus' direction is:

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A practice that will help me spend meaningful time with Christ is:

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A person who can encourage my growth is:

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Someone I can love or serve this week is:

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One specific step I will take before our next session is:

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### This week's assignment

Read: Mark 1:14-20, Mark 3:13-15, and Ephesians 2:1-10.

Pray: Pray daily for three people.

Reach out: Make one caring contact outside your usual church circle. Listen before offering advice, and ask what support would help.

Practice: Carry out the specific commitment you named above.

My three prayer names: \_\_\_\_\_

### Bring this reflection to our next session

Where did I notice an opportunity to follow Jesus more intentionally, and how did I respond?

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Prayer: Lord Jesus, give us teachable hearts. Help us respond to your call. Form us for faithful love and service. Let our lives bear witness to your goodness. Amen.