

RISE

MIDDLE SCHOOL SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Session 9

The Invitation: The Kind of People He Invites

Part 1

- This is the first week of our new series called "The Invitation." We will be talking about Jesus' invitation to follow Him. A disciple is someone who follows Jesus. Over the next several sessions, we will be answering the question "What does it mean to follow Jesus, and what does it look like in real life?" We're going to watch several videos throughout this series to explore those questions.
- In our first video, we are introduced to the first presenter, Nick Redd. He will tell us his personal testimony, his story of how he came to follow Jesus.
- We're also going to read and talk about the story when Jesus invites ordinary people to follow Him and be His disciples. Let's read it now...

Read Matthew 4:18-22.

Then, watch video segment #1: Nick's Story

To watch these videos, use this link to create a free account and then watch The Invitation: A 4 Part Series on Discipleship -> Session 1:

https://www.ydisciple.tv/orders/customer_info?o=148118

After the video, take time to discuss these questions:

- At the end of the video, Nick asks the question, "Why are you here? And what are you hoping to get out of it?" How would you respond to his questions?

- What is one thing that stood out to you in Nick's story?
- Was there anything in particular that you felt you could relate to?
- Nick was invited by Fr. Shawn first simply to have lunch, but ultimately to say 'Yes' to following Jesus. Have you ever had the experience of someone in your life inviting you to go deeper in your faith? (It doesn't have to be in the same, dramatic way it happened with Nick.)

Watch video segment #2: The Kind of People He Invites

After the video, take time to discuss or journal about these questions:

- What is one thing that stood out to you?
- Nick talked about how people were chosen to be disciples followed their rabbis and did everything like them. Who are some of your role models or heroes? What is it about them that you want to imitate?
- Nick explained how "the best of the best" were chosen and the rest were sent home. When was a time that you weren't chosen for something? What was that experience like?
- What does it mean to "be like Jesus"? What do you know about Jesus that we are called to do, too?
- What are some things that might make it difficult for the average middle schooler to follow Jesus?
- Nick talks about Jesus making us more ourselves. Where do you feel most alive?
- What is your reaction to Jesus' invitation: "Come, follow me"? Do you have any hesitations?
- Here are a few things to remember from today...

- When Jesus called his Disciples, he flipped the traditional system on its head. He didn't call the religious elite. He called regular people.
- Jesus' disciples weren't perfectly holy before he called them. And we don't have to be either. It is in following him that we become more like him.
- Discipleship is a process, not a program. It is the process of following Jesus and becoming more like him.
- It is also the process of becoming more yourself. St Catherine of Siena said, "Become who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire."

Session Challenges

Bible Verse: Nick talked about our theme verse in his video. Our verse is Romans 8:28: "We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose."

Reflect and Discuss: What does this verse mean for our lives?

Challenge: Use the Lent Challenges Sheet

Reflect and Discuss:

- What have you given up for Lent and why? If you haven't decided what to give up yet, what are some ideas of things you could give up?

Close in prayer.