

Small Group Discussion Outline



Overcoming Obstacles

Following Jesus is a lifestyle. It is not simply a set of activities that we can add to our lives - everyone is busy enough and there is simply no time to *add* 'religion' to our lives! Following Jesus *is* our life.

There are some things that we need to remove from our lifestyles (like self-centredness), and others that we need to add (like studying God's Word), but mostly, following Jesus is about learning to use our lives to show Him we love Him, to enjoy a relationship with Him, and to introduce others to Him.

Following Jesus can be broken up into five elements:

1. **Fellowship** (sharing your life with other followers of Jesus)
2. **Worship** (enjoying Jesus and telling Him you love Him)
3. **Discipleship** (developing your relationship with and imitating Him)
4. **Ministry** (using your gifts and talents to serve God and others)
5. **Evangelism** (sharing your relationship with God with others)

Whenever we encounter difficulties in following Jesus our response needs to be both Biblical (i.e. based on His Word), and Balanced (i.e. reflecting all five elements of following Jesus.)

Each response will differ in the order with which we address each element. For example, some difficulties may require us to seek help from others first (Fellowship), other difficulties may mean exploring the Bible first to discover what God says about something (Discipleship.)

What we will attempt to do in this time together will be to come up with a customised set of difficulties that we face individually and as a group in following Jesus.

With this list we will then develop first a Biblical response by discussing among the group Bible verses that are relevant to the difficulty and second, we will try to identify which of the five elements is our first priority.



What are some difficulties we can face in following Jesus?
(one per person to begin with) List them on the back page.

E.g. fear, temptation, self-image, lack of understanding, intimidation...

Use the concordance or subject index in the back of your Bible to discover what God's Word says about these things. You may need to think of other words that also describe the same difficulty to look up.

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Difficulty/Obstacle	Biblical Response	First Priority
<i>temptation</i>	<i>Matt 6:13; Mark 14:38; 1 Cor 10:13</i>	<i>worship (turn focus to God, pray)</i>

Following Jesus is not just ‘something we do’, it is who we are, it is our entire life. Following Jesus is life itself.

The five elements of following Jesus are: Fellowship, Worship, Discipleship, Ministry, Evangelism. These things completely sum up the things Jesus did during His life on earth - following Jesus means living a life that balances these five elements.

Remember, God created us to go through life together with Him and together with other followers of Jesus. Difficulties will come, but Jesus would not have called us to follow Him if He didn’t believe we could do it.

Knowing that the Creator of the Universe truly believes that we can follow Jesus is an incredibly comforting thought!

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