Connect Study—Discipleship

In Lk 11:29-30 “As the crowd pressed in on Jesus, he said, “This evil generation keeps asking me to show them a miraculous sign. But the only sign I will give them is the sign of Jonah. What happened to him was a sign to the people of Nineveh that God had sent him. What happens to the Son of Manwill be a sign to these people that he was sent by God”

1. The Sign

The sign that Jesus was talking about refers to Jesus’ death, burial and his resurrection on the third day (Lk 9:22).

1. The Response

The sign of Jonah brought the city of Nineveh to repentance, the sign of Jesus death, burial and resurrection also demands a response.

Immediately after Jesus spoke about his death and resurrection, he said, “If any of you wants to be my follower (disciple), you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it” (Lk 9:23-24)

This statement was recorded over 6 times in the gospels. In fact, in Lk 14:26-27, he repeated the same statement with greater emphasis: “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, **you cannot be my disciple**.”

To take up the cross is to be willing to die daily for Jesus. To give up our own way.

Ps Rick Warren pointed out that Jesus first called the disciples to “come and see”, then he challenged them to “come and follow” but ultimately, he called them to “come and die”. The discipleship journey is one where we progress from where we just “come and see” to be willing to “come and die” for Jesus.

When the three young Hebrew boys in the book of Daniel—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were asked to bow down to the statue of Nebuchadnezzar they responded, “We will not bow down to any image but will serve the Lord”.

As disciples, there’s only one thing worth being concerned about. In the story of Mary and Martha, Jesus said, the only thing worth being concerned about is seeking His presence.

*(Watch Francis Chan’s video—optional)*

Discussion questions:

Jesus made it very clear that we cannot be his disciples unless we take up the cross daily and follow him. What does that mean to you practically?

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down to any idols. What are some of the possible idols in our lives? Can you identify any in your own life and what will you do to get rid of those idols?

Do you identify yourself more with Martha or Mary? What adjustment do you need to make so you can focus on the one thing that is most needed—seeking his presence?

What is your biggest takeaway point from the Francis Chan’s video? (optional)