



Discipling Disciple

Session 8: The Darkest Hour— John 13:36-38, 18:1-27



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Part 1(looking back: Hospitality/Catching up/Review/)

identity

worship

community

Spend time catching up with everyone's week – consider that eating food together can be a good context of building friendship and trust in the group.

After everyone has shared a bit, ask how everyone found crafting and telling the story.

This is the time for caring for those in your group, hearing about what's going on in their lives, asking questions, listening, and praying.

Part 2 (story)

identity

mission

worship

(John 13:36-38, 18:1-27)

Story Crafting Through the Week

Part of Discipling Disciple stage will involve participants learning how to dive deep into the scriptures and craft the story for themselves. This will involve them learning a devotional story crafting process which they can follow through the week. In the 1st Session, the group leader will explain and model this process with the group so each participant is equipped to take into their week.

Day 1 & 2– Finding the Central Image of the Story

Day 1 - Read the story in the scripture 3 times in 3 different translations. (e.g ESV, NIV, NLT)

Day 2 - Speak out the scripture, and record it on your phone, then listen to the story 3 times.

Meditate on the story and note down what you think is the main point or the main image of the story.

Day 3 – Experiencing the Story

After reading and listening to the story and meditating on the main point or image, the next day will be given to walking through the story slowly, listening to the recorded story and putting yourself in the shoes of Peter/the disciples, contemplating on the emotions and experience of that character through the narrative. For example, in the story of Jesus calling Peter, you will imagine yourself as Peter, who has been fishing all night and caught nothing, hearing Jesus teach from his boat, obey his command to throw his net on the other side of the boat, receiving the huge catch of fish, kneeling at the feet of Jesus.

As you are doing that, you are asking yourself the questions

- i) How is Peter feeling at this moment?
- ii) How would you feel if that was you?

This process should be done prayerfully in conversation and communion with the Holy Spirit asking Him to guide you and to reveal things to your heart and mind. You will want to note down any things that come to light for you.



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Day 4 – Research the Story

At this point, after reading and internalising the story we can begin to ask questions concerning the contextual/literary gaps in our comprehension of the story which we can research with the help of study notes/commentaries etc.

These materials will provide some studies notes on some of the main points where a bit of information relating to (language meaning/ phrasing/ literary context and design patterns/geography/historical context etc.) can serve to really aid one's comprehension of the story as a whole. We have also provided a list of commentaries that have been used in the crafting of these stories and their accompanying notes to go deeper with.

Day 5 – Group Session

Read the Scripture, Act out the story, Re-tell the story, Questions.

The hope is that when the group gathers, through this crafting process each participant has engaged with story at a deep level. It is helpful to complete this process together, so the middle section of the session will include telling the story and then getting the group to act out the story. (This may feel odd for a few, but even if all the group does is physically act out the movements of the story, engaging the whole body really helps internalise the story). After acting out the story, it is helpful then for each person to retell the story before moving in to the questions section.

****This is an extra-long piece of scripture, in our story crafting we are highlighting Peter's denial in John 13:36-38 & 18:1-27, however the story of Jesus' trial and death is worth reading in its entirety as it is the climax of the story and indeed the climax of all 4 gospels. The job of crafting the story in the session will involve the details of peter's denial followed by a brief summary of the trial and crucifixion/burial narrative in such a way that the story hangs together as one and doesn't go on for 20 mins. The crafting process will help you discern the main points you want to convey.***

- i) **Ask each person to read the passage in a different version (E.G ESV, NLT, NIV)**
- i) **Act out the Story** - Talk about the characters in the story and choose them. If you know anything about the characters, talk about the person.
 - a. Determine where the scenes will be acted out and the spacing of the story.
 - b. Act out the story with one person narrating.
 - c. Act out the story at least one more time, with people switching parts. This time, stop at crucial points in the story, and certainly at the main action(s) of the story that illustrate the main point of the story. Each time you stop consider how each of the characters must have felt. Describe the scene to each other a bit more, describing what everyone in the scene is doing.
 - d. If you forget parts of the story, the entire group can work together to remember what happened next, or what was said.
- ii) **Ask the questions**
 - 1. What do you like about this story/What stood out to you?
 - 2. What bothered you about this story?
 - 3. What does this story show you about God?
 - 4. What does this story show you about people?



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Part 3 (application and commission)

identity

worship

mission

Ask the remaining questions:

5. If this story is true, what does this story mean for your life? How will you live your life differently having learned this story? What is God showing you? What does this story show us about what it means to be a follower of Jesus? How will you respond? (it is really important to give time in this section for reflection and response. Don't settle for superficial answers, hopefully as you model honesty and vulnerability this will be imbibed by the group. However, you may want to help people go deeper, by asking some follow on questions. Don't be afraid to do so.)
6. Who are you able to tell this story to?

iii) **Now, Get each person to tell the story they have crafted**

Encourage everyone in the group to think of people in their life whom they could retell the story to; mention that at the next session we will recap the story and ask who remembered to tell the story. Again it is helpful to emphasise the reason for going and telling the story ourselves is that it is the best way for us to remember the story and we are learning these stories to share the gospel with others.

Responding in Prayer and Worship

Make sure time is guarded to pray and worship (at least 20 mins). This time is key for responding to God after a deep dive into his word. This should be led sensitively, being aware of who is in the room and what has come out in each session.

This time can be led in a variety of ways,

- i) Listening to worship music
- ii) Singing
- iii) Sharing the Lord's Supper
- iv) Silence
- v) Each person sharing a psalm or a verse of scripture
- vi) Each person thanking God
- vii) Praying for one another: bringing words of encouragement and prophecy

A Note on Storying

In our discipleship materials, we have chosen to craft the stories of scripture into an oral format to be learnt, internalised and re-told. This process is done carefully and seeks to faithfully represent the heart, meaning and narrative of the biblical text in spoken form. We have done this for the following reasons;



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- 1.) The spoken story format requires those in the group to internalise the scripture to some degree. We believe that scripture tells God's unified story that leads to the person of Jesus. God invites us to encounter and respond to him through the hearing, believing and living out in accordance with the truth of his story and the good news that it tells. The process of learning and retelling the story requires and allows the scripture to 'live within us', to shape and guide us, to convict and challenge, to comfort and encourage us. Storying is not the only way this can happen of course, but we have found it to be an especially helpful and intuitive way of forming our worldview to that of Jesus Christ through the internalising the story that reveals him.
- 2.) Once this story is learnt and internalised, those in the group have it to share with others. This can be especially engaging when sharing with people with who don't know Jesus, and even more so in age of authenticity. By sharing a story that is 'living within you', you are imparting to someone something that has changed and/or encouraged you, and therefore it comes with more weight and significance.

How to lead a group in internalizing and retelling the story

These are a few creative ways that people can delve into the Story. Use discernment as to what would best help your group and what they'd be comfortable with.

1. Retell the story: as a group, each person tells as much as they can remember and passes on to someone else. Or.... split up the group in pairs, get each pair to tell the story to each other
2. Scenes: Ask the group to think of the story in scenes like a movie, ask each person what is scene 1, 2 etc. Try and see if you can get people to visualise each scene, the geography, the movements, which characters are doing what etc. This will help internalise the story.
3. Feeling the emotions of the story: Retell the story in sections, or re-read the story in sections b. For each section, talk about the feelings of each character in that section...
4. Being a character in the story: ask each person which character they are in the story, as well as helping to remember the story, this will also help your group engage personally with the story from God's word.
5. Art: Draw a picture of the key theme or key feeling in the story/passage.
6. Music: Listen to a song related to the key theme of the passage and draw your feelings about it/or about God. (Art and Music are especially helpful mediums for people who may struggle with oral learning, and appreciate creative outlets)
7. Act out the story: Get everyone to act out the story as a group



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Day 4 Study Notes for Session 8 John 13: 36–38, 18:1-19:42 to be sent out to the group

In 18:11 – Why don't Jesus' followers fight to protect him? And what is the cup that the Father has given Jesus to drink?

The scene of Jesus' betrayal begins with the guards coming to arrest him at the guidance of Judas, and Peter in typical fashion, pulls out his sword to cut off the ear of one of the High Priest's servants (note – not one of the soldiers), Jesus rebukes Peter's action with rhetorical question – 'put your sword back in its sheath, shall I not drink the cup that the father has given me.'

If you have been following the stories so far, we have already seen on numerous occasions that Jesus knows that he is going to Jerusalem to be shamefully treated and killed, and John is keen to point out that Jesus 'knew all that was about to happen to him' v4, before revealing himself to be captured. In session 3 we saw that this is what it means for him to be the messiah. The Kingdom of God is a different kingdom than the kingdoms of this world, Jesus tells Pilot later on in v36 that is why his disciples are not fighting with swords to free their master. In the last session, we saw that this kingdom is one that advances and is marked through sacrificial love(for a helpful video on the nature of the kingdom of God see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmFPS0f-kzs&t=197s>) , it is this love Jesus shows in the giving up of himself. In this moment Jesus allows Darkness to have its way with him(Luke 22:53), 'the ruler of this world is coming'(John 14:31) and Jesus will submit himself to be mocked, beaten, and executed. It is not just the Pharisees and the Romans who are seeking the destruction of Jesus, underneath them lies spiritual powers of darkness orchestrating the light of the world to be snuffed out, as we have already seen with Satan's work in Judas.

But why does Jesus allow this to happen? Jesus says that there is a cup from his Father that he must drink. Behind, the human agents of Caiaphas, Judas and Pilot, and even behind the demonic spiritual agency of Satan and the powers of Darkness, God is supreme and sovereign agent, weaving his plan for the victory of his kingdom on earth. But why does this plan involve Jesus drinking a cup? What is the cup?

In the other gospel accounts of the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prays, 'Lord if you are willing, remove this cup from me.' In the immediate context, the cup is analogous to the suffering and forsakenness that Jesus will experience over the next 18 hours, but why a cup?

Through-out the prophets 'The cup' in God's hand is one full of divine wrath and judgement against all evil and corruption. This punishment is made for the evil nations and for Jerusalem, God's own people, whose society has become corrupt with idolatry, greed, sexual deviancy, oppression and injustice. In this graphic metaphor this cup is full of a strong alcoholic drink a 'cup of staggering' that causes shame and dishonour¹, destruction and death. (See Isaiah 51:17-22 Jer 25:15-16, 27-28, Hab 2:16, Zech 12:2, Ezek 23:31-33, Lam 4:21, Psalm 75:8)

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This is the judgement from the Father that Jesus chooses to drink on our behalf, Jesus will be stripped naked and experience the shame and death warranted for all our evil, he will drink the cup of God's wrath and punishment. This is the act prefigured in Isaiah 53 of the suffering servant who takes away the sins of God's people. This is the plan for how God's Messiah will initiate the Kingdom and rule as God's king, enthroned on a cross and crowned with thorns twisted into his forsaken brow.

Why do the soldiers fall to the ground when Jesus says 'I am – Ego Eimi'

Throughout John's Gospel, Jesus is recorded 2 sets of 7 times saying I am – *ego eimi* – . This is the Greek translation for the Covenant name of God in Exodus 3:14, 'I AM WHO I AM' this is how God reveals his identity to Moses, similarly Jesus will use this phrase 'I Am' to identify himself. In 1 set of 7 uses of 'I Am – *ego eimi*', there follows an amazing reference to Jesus' unique identity...e.g Jn 6 I am the bread of life, Jn 11 I am the resurrection and the Life, Jn 15 I am the true vine. The other set of seven times where Jesus says 'I am', act as a design pattern echoing the name of God. (JN 4:26, 6:20, 8:24, 8:28, 8:58 – Before Abraham was I AM, 13:19, 18:5) For a summary of this pattern in John see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUfh_wOsauk

When the soldiers seek Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus responds with the 7th and final I Am. D.A Carson makes the point that though we cannot be sure these soldiers would be aware that in saying 'I Am' Jesus is identifying himself as the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, we do know that the direct authority Jesus' words left a similar group of soldiers awestruck claiming 'no one ever spoke like this man'. Carson writes 'if they have been dumbfounded before by his teaching, his authority, his directness in the full light of day in the precincts of the temple where they feel most at home, it is not hard to believe they are staggered by his open self-disclosure on a sloping mountainside in the middle of the night – the more so if some of them hear the overtones of God's self-disclosure in the prophecy of Isaiah. It may take them a few seconds to regroup; in the Evangelist's eyes, their physical ineptitude was another instance of people responding better than they knew.'²

² Carson, p575



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Feedback from Group Leader

In our vision for discipleship, we have identified 4 key ingredients to healthy and growing disciples. As you are leading your group, for each session, make some notes under each heading for how the group is faring in each of these areas.

identity

worship

community

mission