

Discipleship and Vocation

A Video Teaching Series from Archbishop David Edwards

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Archbishop David offers and encourages each parish to use this video series on discipleship and vocation, as indicated in his charge to the 139th session of synod. It is intended for both individuals and groups.

The purpose of this series is to give an opportunity for time to reflect on the nature of discipleship and vocation. These topics are more than merely an academic study, they are to do with the whole of life.

Vocation has its origin in the Latin word *vocare*, which means to call or be called. It is part of that set of words which include *vocal*. In the Bible we read that Jesus called his disciples. One example of where this is recorded is in Matthew 10:1. Jesus calls the disciples using a verb which in ancient Greek can only be used in what is known as the middle voice. It implies the caller and the called are both the subject of the call and they act together. Jesus is following his call as the Messiah and invites those he calls to participate in it with him.

Something we notice amongst the disciples of Jesus is that they join him in his vocation as they work out theirs. A good example of this comes from the feeding of the five thousand. This miracle is reported in each of the Gospels and the disciples are given the task of solving the problem of obtaining food. They provide it and Jesus provides the miracle.

It is hoped that this study will enable us to discover how we work with Jesus and each other to discern our personal vocation, the vocation of the church where we gather, and how these work together with God's intention for the Church.

Individual Study

If you are using the material here for your own discernment the best way to do so is to find a quiet place where you can watch the videos. Watch each video making a note of anything you think is important as you go along. Then watch it for a second time going back to the things you have noted and ask yourself why they stood out to you. Write down your answer.

Then read through any scripture passages mentioned and use the following questions from Gospel Based Discipleship to help you to think about the Bible passages:

1. What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for you in the scripture you have read?
2. What is Jesus saying to you?
3. What is Jesus calling you to do?

Ideally you should take time to read the reading three times asking a different question each time. Again, write down anything that strikes you as important.

Repeat this process during all the sessions. By the end you will have developed a personal journal of where God might be calling you. It may then be time to go to discuss what you have discovered with others, perhaps the minister of your church.

Group Study

If you intend to do this as a group, I suggest the same process as for an individual, remembering that you are looking for the vocation of your community as well as your own.

Take everything you have written down to the group meeting and spend time sharing what you have discovered in your own time of reflection. Then watch the video and read the scriptures together, asking the same three questions, but this time they should relate to the Church and its vocation:

1. What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for your church in the scripture you have read?
2. What is Jesus saying to us?
3. What is Jesus calling us to do?

Someone should be designated to keep a journal for the church, though individuals may wish to do so as well.

Outcomes

As you progress through this series, watching each video and engaging with the selected scriptures, two things will happen: you will understand the word vocation more deeply and a vision for the mission and ministry of your church will begin to form.

One of the most important things during this time, whether doing this individually, or together is for you to be willing to step out of the way and try to hear God. You will probably find that God will speak to you out of the blue, when you are not engaged with intentionally seeking to hear. Be ready to remember or note things down.

Response and Feedback Form

Please let the bishop's office know if your parish, congregation or group is using this study series by completing [this online form](#). We appreciate any feedback you wish to provide.

Course Outline and Links

0. Introduction

Video: <https://youtu.be/7MQjR2c0E18>

Scripture: Matthew 22: 36–40

Gospel Based Discipleship questions:

(for reflecting on the scripture passages in all sessions)

- What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for you/your church in the scripture you have read?
- What is Jesus saying to you/your church?
- What is Jesus calling you/your church to do?

Further reflection questions for groups:

- In what ways have you experienced love in your life?
- How does your congregation show love to each other and in our community?

1. Image Bearers

Video: <https://youtu.be/MzlXDV-sD48>

Scripture: Genesis 1:26–27, 1 Corinthians 12:12–27

Reflection questions:

- In what ways do you reflect God's image?
- How is your church a reflection of God's image?
- How does the description of the Church as the body of Christ help you to think about the Church reflecting the image of God?

2. Disciples of Abraham

Video: https://youtu.be/SPwWji_0H4s

Scripture: Genesis 12:1–9

Reflection questions:

- Read page 555 of the BCP. Have you ever established such a rule for yourself? Could you do so?
- Could your Church establish its own rule?
- In what ways are you and your church a blessing to those around you?

3. **Vocation and the Call of God – Joseph**

Video: <https://youtu.be/KSfDkEEGPUQ>

Scripture: Genesis 46:28–47:6

Reflection questions:

- How is God seen at work in the lives of Jacob, Joseph, and their family?
- Do you have experience of God working in your family in unexpected ways?

4. **The Vocation of Moses**

Video: <https://youtu.be/UcYj09EzKy8>

Scripture: Exodus 3: 1–15, Ephesians 2:10

Reflection questions:

- What are the works you think God prepared for you and or your congregation to do “in advance”?
- Does our vocation change as we age?

5. **Vocation of the People of God in the Old Testament**

Video: <https://youtu.be/eV6Z-u9guQE>

Scripture: Micah 6:6–9

Reflection questions:

- In what ways do you (your church) work for justice?
- How are you involved in showing mercy?
- How has the Church lacked humility over the years?

6. **The Vocation of Jesus**

Video: <https://youtu.be/crliGxhgt7c>

Scripture: Matthew 9: 27–38

Reflection questions:

- What is the role of the Church in loving the world?
- What is the Gospel that is to be shared with all the world?
- Who are the “crowds” (or lost sheep) today?

7. Disciples in the New Testament

Video: <https://youtu.be/anMn0eHCKQo>

Scripture: Acts 1:1-8

Reflection questions:

- What are the challenges in following Jesus, individually and as a church?
- How do we listen to the Holy Spirit for direction?

8. Disciples as Change Makers

Video: <https://youtu.be/7YjfHMDnyVQ>

Scripture: Acts 10:23b-48

Reflection questions:

- How has being a follower of Jesus changed you?
- How does your church act as an agent for change in the community you serve?

9. The New Testament Role of the Church

Video: <https://youtu.be/rVUUJ-wE6K0>

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Revelation 19:7

Reflection questions:

- How have you felt supported by your local congregation?
- Are there practical changes which could be made to make your congregation more like the images from the New Testament?

10. Vocation Today

Video: <https://youtu.be/udbC6-hXZDE>

Scripture: Philippians 3:17-4:1

Reflection questions:

- How can you and your congregation dig more deeply around vocation?
- What is the call that our churches have to work for the good of all?