
F. BECOMING AND GROWING AS A DISCIPLE

F.2: Is there a *path to maturity*? Four Passages: *Come & See, Follow Me, Be with Me, Remain in Me* [*John 1:35-39, Matthew 4:19,* *Mark 3:13-14, John 15:5*]

A STORY

Jesus began his public ministry at age 30. He came into the land of Israel proclaiming that the Kingdom of God was at hand. When disciples began to follow him, he had four stages that are evident in the gospels. A church in Portland adopted these stages as the pathway of maturity. Each stage has qualities that can be measured and progress was evaluated on this. Many leaders to this day use these stages as a path to maturity.

DIGGING INTO THE BIBLE

Come and See from **John 1: 29-39** He ends this passage with *“Come and you will see.”* The disciples spent time with Jesus and then returned to fishing. There seem to be several characteristics in this stage. The disciples upon this invitation ultimately said “Yes” to trusting Jesus and “No” to saving themselves. Later in this journey Jesus gives us the second stage.

Follow Me from **Matthew 4:19** Here he said to his disciples *“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”* During this stage, Jesus invited them to follow. He then promised a result. They in turn left their nets and followed. They were saying “Yes” to growing and “No” to staying the same. In this stage, they increased their time and commitment to being with Jesus. That commitment shows up in our lives in our devotional life, study time, fellowship time etc.

Be with Me from **Mark 3:13-14** is where he gathered the disciples and he selected 12 to be with him. It was during this time they were engaged in ministry on their own, observing and learning the ways of Jesus. In this stage a disciple is saying “Yes” to serving and leading and “No” to distractions. The follower's commitment level has increased and he or she is teaming in the ministry.

Remain in me from **John 15:5** occurred in the last week of Jesus's life in this passage he announced to them that he was going away and would send the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth. He encouraged them to remain connected to the vine so that they could bear fruit. In this stage a person says "Yes" to parenting other disciples to maturity and says "no" to self. This stage has the highest commitment and the highest fruitfulness.

DISCUSSION AND DISCOVERY

1. What are the measurements using Yes and No in each stage?
2. How did Jesus move his disciples into each stage?
3. What does this tell us about the Kingdom of God?
4. Which stage seem to take the longest time period to grow?
5. What obstacles stopped people from moving to the next stage?

APPLICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

6. What is your thinking about how people move from stage to stage?
7. What stage do you want to move to?
8. How are you going to get there?
9. What changes in your life is Jesus asking you to take?
10. When would you like to get started?
11. What do you need to be successful along the journey?
12. How can I be of help?

LIST ANY OTHER VERSES THAT YOU HAVE FOUND WOULD ADDRESS THIS ISSUE: