



small groups

Discussion Guide



Becoming Devoted

Philippians 2:12-18

Ice Breaker

(5 minutes)

Christian recording artist Todd Agnew led worship this week. Can you name any songs / albums he has recorded? Who in your group can name the most?

Lesson Review

(45 minutes)

"Becoming" is shorthand for the lifelong process of discipleship. After believing, the next step for every Christian is to become more like Jesus.

Read Philippians 2:12-18

Verse 13 says, “For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.” The King James Version says “to will and to do his good pleasure”. This speaks of intent (will) and action (do).

Discuss

- What is God’s intent and his action? Are they the same thing? Does God ever take action unintentionally? Does he ever intend something and not make it into action?

1. Know God’s Will

Read Romans 8:29

Andy said that scripture speaks of two categories of God’s will: his moral will and his sovereign will.

God’s moral will is that his followers grow in faith, character and devotion to God. This is called sanctification. The specifics of this will are laid out clearly in the Biblical standards for holiness and in the example of Jesus’ sinless life. God’s moral will is that people become more and more like Jesus.

God’s sovereign will, embodied in particular decisions and circumstances, is not so specifically defined in scripture. God doesn’t always give us detailed instructions about which job to take, which person to marry, which shirt to wear.

Discuss

- How do these two parts of God’s will relate to the dichotomy you discussed in Verse 13?

2. Choose God’s Will

Andy said that we sometimes imagine God’s will as an unpleasant assignment. That’s because we don’t like to do anyone’s will but our own. We like to direct our own steps. But if we truly believe that God is good and that he loves us, then we can more easily submit our own wills to his. Andy said, “It is in the pursuit of God’s moral will that we find our hearts’ desires fulfilled.”

“God is God. Because he is God, he is worthy of my trust and obedience. I will find rest nowhere but in his holy will, a will that is unspeakably beyond my largest notions of what he is up to.”

– Elisabeth Elliot

3. Do God's Will

Andy offered three steps to doing God's will.

1. Pray every day.

"Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought me in safety to this new day; Preserve me with your mighty power, that I may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all I do, direct me to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen."

2. Ask, "What Would Jesus Do?"

3. Fill out the Next Steps Inventory

Application

(15 minutes)

Healthy community includes accountability. Ask one another these questions.

- Did you pray every day this week?
- How has WWJD impacted your daily decisions this week?
- Have you filled out a Next Steps Inventory? (Note: it's still available online at irvingbible.org/nextsteps)

Life Marks

As we move through this series, we'll be building a list of six characteristics of a mature disciple. Each week, we'll add another of these "life marks" to the list.

A mature disciple of Jesus is:

- Regularly engaged in time with the Father
- Wholly devoted to God's perfect will

