

Trek Discussion 2

'Leaving'

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Relationships are the most important thing, so start with warmth and hospitality. Get acquainted. You could do it your own way or use some of the following questions to get people talking...

- *Life has many 'leavings' (times where we move on to something new). Can you name some healthy 'leavings' that life requires?*
- *Which 'leaving' was best for you?*
- *Which 'leaving' was hard for you?*

LIVING MEANS LEAVING

*"Leave something for someone but don't leave someone for something."
- Enid Blyton, Five on a Hike Together*

"One reaches a goal by deciding to go away." - Jorge P. Guerrero

"To get somewhere, you have to leave somewhere." - Matt

Today's topic is leaving. But first we need to be reminded that 'staying' is just as important. Sometimes people leave because they are cowards, because they can't forgive, because of hate or anger, or because of immaturity. That kind of leaving is not what we're discussing. We are talking about leaving behind things that need to be left so we can grow. Like leaving the womb, leaving hospital for new life, or leaving behind sin or evil.

For your 'yes' to mean something you also have to say 'no' to other things. To say 'yes' to Jesus you must say 'no' to your old life and to evil and all that is not of Christ. You cannot say 'yes' to Jesus and to other gods at the same time. Following Jesus means leaving the old ways of the world!

Group Discussion:

- *What do you think of all this? Does it make sense?*
- *Is the kind of leaving we're getting at clear for you or do you need it made clearer?*

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY LEAVING

Here follows a collection of eight Bible passages. Each is an example of healthy 'leaving'. Read each one by one. After each Bible passage discuss these three things:

- *What's the "leaving" in the Bible verse?*
- *What do you notice?*
- *What would happen if the 'leaving' mentioned in each verse did not happen?*

Genesis 2:24

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 8:16-17

Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you...

Genesis 12:1,4

The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's family to the land I will show you... So Abram went as the Lord had told him..."

Hebrews 11:8-9

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents

Exodus 12:31

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Get up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as you asked..."

Genesis 19:15-17

As morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Get up! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city." But he lingered. So the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. And as they brought them out, one said, "Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop anywhere..."

1 Corinthians 13:11

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.

When I became an adult, I gave up childish ways.

Ephesians 4:21-25

...when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

WHAT MUST WE LEAVE BEHIND TO FOLLOW CHRIST?

In one of the most provocative passages in the Gospels three people ask to follow Jesus. Notice that this happens when he is 'on the road to Jerusalem' (Luke 9:51,57) and that he has 'set his face toward Jerusalem' (and his death there) and will not be distracted! For each person who approaches Jesus he points out something they must leave behind. Read and reflect...

Luke 9:57-62

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Group Discussion:

- *In each case what was Jesus telling the person to leave behind?*
- *What challenges you in this story?*
- *Rather than explaining the offensiveness in the story away, what can we learn from it?*
- *Yes, these are harsh words of Jesus! Why can he speak this way?*

WHAT ARE YOU CALLED TO LEAVE?

Sue Monk Kidd writes:

“A spiritual pilgrim needs to discern when his or her life is stunted in an old field and find the courage and determination to go to a “new land” that the Lord will show (Abraham-Journey) so that you can find wholeness.”

Group Discussion – Just one question:

- *What is Jesus calling you to leave today?*

CLOSING REFLECTION

Finish today by first quietly reflecting Christ who left heaven for you.
Quietly read this passage. Sit with it for a while.
Then close in prayer.

Philippians 2:5-8

*Your attitude should be the same as that of
Christ Jesus:*

*who being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death,
even death on a cross!*