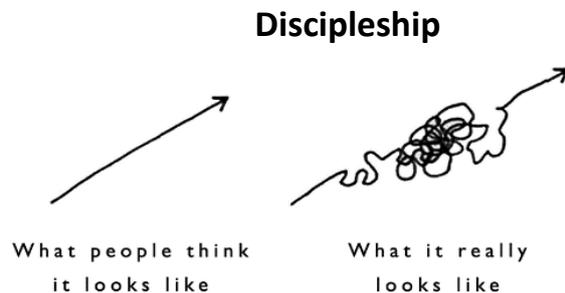


How to get unstuck and how to help others do the same

Introduction:

We are all on a journey in our discipleship, and sometimes we get 'stuck' or even feel we are 'moving backwards' on our journeys. And at these times we often need the help of others to get 'unstuck' and move forward again. This is what it means to be the church and to 'spur one another on... and encourage one another' (Heb 10:24)



Why do we sometimes get 'stuck'? What are some of the reasons?

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Are there any that you relate to at this moment in time?

12 steps to getting unstuck...

- **Be honest and real with others and God**
 - Read the Psalms (Psalm 88; Psalm 69; Psalm 42)
 - Take your feelings to God in honest prayer
 - 'Give God your deepest emotions'
- **Ask God 'Why am I stuck and what can I do about it?'**
 - Take time out to ask this question prayerfully with God, trusting that God will reveal why you are stuck and what to do
 - Pray 'God what are you wanting to do in me at this time?'
 - Warning... but then you will need to be obedient to get unstuck.

- **Hold tight and let others support you**
 - Sometimes we just have to hold tight... and allow others to 'carry us' (Luke 5:18-19)
 - 'Pray as you can and not as you can't' & trust that is enough
 - Hold to truth not feelings
 - Watch the fraud mentality - 'I can't come to church like this with all my doubts'

- **Find someone to journey with you**
 - Find someone to encourage you, pray for you, listen to you, walk with you
 - Find people to help you **interpret events differently** – especially your disappointments – to help you see where God might be in this.

- **Connect up in community again (Life groups etc.)**
 - A single coal grows cold and dull out of the fire
 - Find people who will inspire you and encourage you towards Jesus not away.

- **Consider more in depth prayer ministry/counselling**
 - Prayer ministry/counselling can bring real freedom and help us get unstuck
 - God can reveal blockages from the past that we don't even know about.
 - Find people to pray though with you the hurts/disappointments (E.g. Christian Prayer Ministry Course, Harn Hill Healing Centre)

- **Confessing and repenting of the blockages (with others where necessary)**
 - Are we living unholy lives – deliberately out of God's will – admit and repent
 - Are we deliberately believing lies of the enemy & living in them that stop us from being who God has called us to be? E.g. neglecting calling out of fear 'I can't do that...' (see Moses and Exodus 3 & 4)
 - Are we holding unforgiveness and bitterness against someone?

- **Getting back into holy habits (even if we don't feel God is there)**
 - Daily reflection on scripture is the most important way to grow
 - Often using set liturgy can help us to pray (e.g. St Chad's booklet)
 - Read the Bible anyway and trust that God would eventually break through
 - Podcasts – Letio365... try different ways

- **Exploring new ways of encountering God**
 - E.g. Ignatian spirituality – contemplative tradition, Silence, Waiting Room
 - Go back to the places and methods which most help you encounter God

- Retreats
- Spiritual accompanier
- **Reflect on your image of ‘Who God is?’ & ‘How He sees you?’**
 - Has your upbringing or disappointments in life affected the way you see God?
 - Process this with someone
 - Read ‘With’ by Sky Jethani – How do you relate to God?
- **Step out again... and take a risk with God**
 - Sometimes we hold back from serving because we are not in a good place, but sometimes it is in the serving that we find life and God again.
- **This Lent review your journey with the ‘Discipleship MOT’ and have a ‘1-2-1 conversation’**
 - Take some time out to prayerfully work through this with God
 - Then reflect with a reflector in a ‘discipleship 1-2-1’

And remember...

- We all get stuck – Bible is full of it.
- Great Christians too - Mother Theresa

“Please pray specially for me that I may not spoil His work and that Our Lord may show Himself — for there is such terrible darkness within me, as if everything was dead,” she wrote in 1953. “It has been like this more or less from the time I started ‘the work.’”

“I utter words of community prayers — and try my utmost to get out of every word the sweetness it has to give — but my prayer of union is not there any longer — I no longer pray.”

But she kept serving anyway....

Eugene Peterson:

Discipleship is a ‘**Long obedience in the same direction**’

- Whether we feel it or not
- Whether God breaks through or not

But we don’t have to walk it alone... that is why we have each other.

Resources:

Healing:

Christian Prayer Ministry Course (Friday 24th April and Saturday 25th April at Eden Church)

An opportunity to receive teaching on how God can bring healing from the past, and an opportunity to have an extended prayer time with experienced prayers on the Saturday.

www.standrewsandallsaints.org/events/malvern-christian-prayer-ministries-course/

Harn Hill Centre of Christian Healing

Offers retreats and courses with healing prayer. Several people from church have been recently and found it helpful.

<https://www.harnhillcentre.org.uk/>

Books:

***Disappointment with God* by Philip Yancey**

Addresses the issues of where disappointment in life has affected our relationship with God

***With: Reimagining the way you relate to God* by Sky Jethani**

Looks at different ways to relate to God and suggests that more than anything we need to learn to live 'WITH' God, not For, From, Above or under God.

***Paradoxology: Why Christianity was never meant to be simple* by Krish Kandiah**

Looks at some of the paradoxes of the Bible about who God is and seeks to suggest ways in which these difficult tensions can actually reenergise our faith again.

***God has a name* by John Mark Comer**

A refreshing overview of the character of God which asks 2 questions: 'Who is God?' and 'What is he like?' The answers to these questions can reignite our relationship with him.

***Enjoying God* by Tim Chester**

Talks about how we can 'enjoy God' with each chapter taking a particular topic, with a prayer exercise to do and questions to ask yourself after each.

Discipleship Resources:

Further discipleship resources including aids to read the Bible and pray, can be found on the 'discipleship resources' section of our website:

www.standrewsandallsaints.org/discipleship-resources/