

## Enlisting Other Apprentices

*After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything, he rose and followed him. **Luke 5:27-28***

*And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." **Luke 9:23***

*Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple...So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple." **Luke 14:25-27, 33***

*And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." **Mark 1:17***

*He also told them this parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher." **Luke 6:40***

Jesus, God's apprentice in human life, apprenticed others. He mentored Peter, James, John and other disciples. As he followed God by imitating and imaging God in a truly human life, so Jesus called others to follow him.

"Follow me," Jesus says. To follow him is to deny ourselves. To deny ourselves is to take up our cross and die to ourselves. To die to ourselves is to open ourselves to becoming like Jesus who is our life, our mentor for a new life. To become like Jesus is to give ourselves to others through mentoring others in this new life.

Our life in Jesus means imitating Jesus by entering into his life. We follow Jesus into the water and are baptized. We follow Jesus into the wilderness and seek solitude with God. We follow Jesus into intimacy with others and seek out friends with whom we can reveal our true selves. We follow Jesus by taking up his mission in the world. We follow Jesus by apprenticing others just as he apprenticed his own disciples.

The mission of Jesus depends on apprenticing others, mentoring others in the faith. We do not become disciples of Jesus in solitude or alone. We become disciples through community and apprenticeship. Others took us under their wing. They taught us, modeled life for us, invited us to walk with them and mentored us. The faith is embraced by others through disciples become like Jesus and apprenticing others in the Way.

"Fully trained" means fully equipped or qualified. When disciples complete their training, they are models of their teacher. When one completes an apprenticeship, they pursue

their assigned tasks fully equipped to become like their teacher. They are equipped to be mentors as well. They tutor others whom they apprentice in the life of faith.

The call to discipleship—the invitation to participate in the life of God through Jesus— involves discipling others. Following Jesus entails inviting others to follow him as well.

Apprentices become practitioners, and practitioners become mentors.

**Questions for Discussion:**

1. Who has mentored you in the faith? Who was your first mentor? What qualities did they have? Who is your mentor now?
2. What does it mean to be “fully trained” in order to be like Jesus as a mentor?
3. Whom do you mentor now? Do you feel qualified to mentor? Why or why not? If not, what do you lack to be a mentor?
4. How can the church encourage mentorship? How can it equip others for mentoring and encourage apprentices?