

Alison Morgan

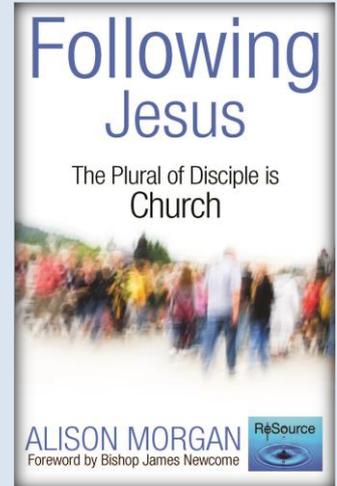
Following Jesus

The Plural of Disciple is Church

ReSource 2015

Revd Dr Alison Morgan is well known as the author of *The Wild Gospel* and *Word on the Wind*. *Following Jesus* is Alison's latest book, published in April 2015.

The question 'what does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus' is a key one for the church today. Alison has wide experience of helping people to answer this question, and this book offers a radical new contribution to the debate. Discipleship, Alison suggests, is about living and sharing our Christian faith, not just being taught it; it is not about what we know, but about who we are becoming. Defining discipleship as 'a form of apprenticeship undertaken in community', and drawing on her experience of working with people in ordinary communities all over the UK and in Africa, Alison offers a compelling mix of personal experience, real life stories and theological reflection.



What are people saying about this book?

**"If you are looking for something to excite people about Christian discipleship, this is it."
Bishop James Newcome**

"There seems to be a growing consensus around 'Discipleship' as the greatest challenge facing Christians in the West - and, as usual, Alison Morgan has not only identified the key issue but also provided a lucid and practical insight into what it means. I love her writing. Somehow she manages to combine substantial scholarship with highly personal reflection and down to earth illustration, so this book - like her previous work - is easy to read as well as intellectually and spiritually stimulating. Alison has discovered from her own wide-ranging experience that discipleship is something we learn and develop together. A significant part of her own journey has been promoting the tremendously successful 'Rooted in Jesus' course in Africa. The challenge African culture poses to complacent, bored, individualistic Christians in the West comes across forcefully in the specific examples she provides of discipleship being worked out in countries such as Kenya and Tanzania. Part of this has to do with 'signs and wonders' and the importance of seeing as well as hearing. But much of it is about people learning with and from each other. Growth in discipleship involves commitment to other disciples as well as to Jesus. So she defines discipleship as 'a form of apprenticeship undertaken in community'.

I like the way in which Alison roots her theological reflection firmly in Scripture. She draws out particular emphases in the four gospels and shows how - in the Bible as well as in experience - 'making disciples involves a lot more than just leading people to faith.' This book is about living and sharing Christianity; not just being taught it. It is about becoming a practitioner rather than an observer, which means both being accountable to other Christians and engaging deeply with the Bible."

From the Foreword by James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle.

"Alison Morgan is a star! Combining her deep faith and practical experience as a Christian teacher and evangelist, she challenges us to think afresh about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and for churches to be communities where people help one another to develop their relationship with Him. A wise and prophetic book which challenges us to consider the question 'How do I make my faith in Christ real today?'" **The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu**

"Discipleship is an absolutely central part of our theology and of our Christian practice. And Alison Morgan is one of our finest Christian writers. I commend this book to anyone who wants to grow in Christ and to see their community grow too, spiritually, numerically and as Christ's mature followers." **Paul Bayes, Bishop of Liverpool**

"Alison Morgan writes with a rare blend of wisdom and inspiration. This beautiful book is peppered with story, challenge and hope. I cannot recommend Alison's work highly enough." **Mark Russell, Chief Executive, Church Army**

"Alison Morgan has written a fine book on the Church's greatest challenge of our time - discipleship. Live this book and discover how God can change your life, your church and your community." **Bishop Graham Cray, former leader of Fresh Expressions**

"Alison clearly identifies the central calling of every Christian - to be a disciple of Christ - and explores what that means for us in the realities of modern life. She inspires with great testimonies, instructs with clear teaching, shapes with a coherent framework of discipleship, encourages with gritty realism, and through broad experience beautifully portrayed, she invites us afresh into the grace and freedom of lives fully given to Christ." **Revd Mark Tanner, Warden, Cranmer Hall, Durham University**

"God has already used Alison Morgan's inspired writing to touch very many lives. This wonderful new book addresses the question of discipleship, a crucial one for today's church. She insightfully and engagingly elucidates what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and rightly insists that only as disciples together, as church, shall we be a truly effective part of God's great mission to transform not just individuals but the whole creation in Christ. **John Inge, Bishop of Worcester**

"Alison beautifully balances the passionate individual following of Jesus in order to become more like him, with the well-argued emphasis and practical application that the plural of disciple is Church. It should become standard reading, thinking and living." **George Lings, Church Army Research Unit**

"Here is an ever-expanding vision of what it means to be disciples of Jesus. It is simply written but exciting and profoundly challenging – calling us to a deeper experience of God's life and a more engaged participation in God's mission. Full of real life stories, it beckons us to abandon ourselves to God's great story and thereby discover life in abundance." **Martin Breytenbach, Bishop of the Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist, South Africa, and Chair of Growing the Church.**

"More and more I hear it said that creating disciples is the greatest challenge facing the church today. *The Plural of Disciple is Church* is timely, filling the great need for an accessible, inspiring, easily understood and practical book on this vital subject. Alison Morgan addresses the issues surrounding discipleship chapter by chapter, including some very useful group studies. I was particularly challenged by the chapter which carries the book's title, as it helped me see more clearly that discipleship is not about what the church DOES, it's about what the church IS - a community of disciples. Highly recommended." **Charles Whitehead, International Catholic author and speaker and Chairman of the Ecumenical International Consultation on World Evangelisation**

"Alison writes with great clarity and conviction in reminding us that, 'Discipleship is a form of apprenticeship undertaken in community'. This is our calling and our privilege. Through engaging with the text of Scripture and with poignant, practical illustrations and group study sections – and never shrinking from the inherent cost of following Jesus – Alison enjoins us and gives us the tools – whatever our 'tradition' – to become intentional, welcoming, attractive and Christlike communities of faith. Essential reading for all God's people." **Stuart Robinson, Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn, Australia, and author of *Starting Mission-Shaped Churches***

"Recent years have seen a growing consensus that making disciples of Christ who live out their faith in daily life should be a priority for every church. Alison Morgan writes with passion about the urgent need to rediscover a practical and transformational discipleship, taking us back to the New Testament to study how Jesus coached his followers and how the early churches provided 'apprenticeship in community.' Alison draws on her own experience as director of the *Rooted in Jesus* discipleship programme in Africa and illustrates her argument with encouraging stories and examples from a wide variety of contexts. For ministers, leaders and others involved in planning church courses and programmes, this is a timely, challenging and practical exploration of how to make disciples today." **Ven Paul Moore, author of *Making Disciples in Messy Church***

"When Jesus calls you to 'follow', he also call you to 'go'. The disciple who learns from Jesus is also the apostle sent out by Jesus. The church is the company of men and women who follow and go, learning from him and being sent out by him. This timely book will help it all make sense." **Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Chelmsford**

"*Following Jesus* is a timely resource for the whole church: rich in stories, resourcing deep reflection, full of practical wisdom." **Steven Croft, Bishop of Sheffield**

"Drawing on her deep love and knowledge of the scriptures, Alison Morgan explores the exciting business of being a disciple of Jesus Christ and living as part of his church - illustrated with some excellent true life stories. I hope many people will read this book and benefit from its wisdom." **Alan Smith, Bishop of St Alban's**

2A fresh and refreshing account of what discipleship looks like, with many helpful nuggets of teaching, reflection and living testimony." **Phil Potter, Archbishops' Missioner and Team Leader of Fresh Expressions**

"Alison Morgan combines a fine intellect with a profound spirituality, and practical grasp of the Christian life. She offers a rich vision of a life in God, seen as a joyful dance, the true answer to the spiritual homelessness of the modern world." **Peter Forster, Bishop of Chester**

To find out more, read the forward or download a sample chapter click [here](#).

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Following Jesus is available from [The Mathetes Trust](#), from [Alison's website](#) or on Amazon UK.

To order direct within North America (Canada and US) from Tyndale Seminary bookstore click [here](#).