

Week 11: Become Like Jesus Pt 4

1 John 4:7-21

To be studied in preparation for November 25, 2018.

Leader's Note: Please refer to the resource, "Storying," available [on our website](#), for a detailed guide on how to facilitate storying in your group.

this is life:

A people apprenticed to
the Life of Jesus

Why We Have Gathered

Our common goal as apprentices of Jesus is to learn to be *loved by Jesus*, to be *led by Jesus*, to *become like Jesus*, to *lead others to Jesus*.

Establishing "Safe Harbour"

For us to open up to God and one another, the environment needs to be safe, and we each need to be safe for each other. Let's remember the following guidelines:

- Practice **good listening skills**: open body postures and eye contact, no "cross talk" (side conversations when someone is sharing), non-judgmental reflection, attention to the one sharing (rather than forming your own thoughts), allowing others to finish their thought, and not rushing to fill a pause or moment of silence.
- Honour "**sharing boundaries**" and **confidentiality**: Don't share what you don't have permission to share, here or outside our meetings, and don't gossip about others. Tell your own story.
- **Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue**. Our aim is "**gospel fluency**": pointing toward Jesus' life-changing power and the truths of who we are, who God is, and what God has done in Christ.
- Practice **healthy conflict resolution**: offer **grace, patience** and the **benefit of the doubt**; accept your responsibility for **peace**; seek swift **reconciliation** and **make amends** for hurts caused.
- Let's seek to be **co-learners** and make this a safe space to ask **any and all questions**.

Week 10 Follow-up: *Spiritual disciplines or practices are an important means by which we make ourselves available to Jesus' transforming grace. Is there a "classic" (normative for all apprentices of Jesus) or "personal" (targeting a specific issue or desire in your life) discipline that you are considering to adopt for your own life?*

Entering Into the Story: 1 John 4:7-21

Setting the Scene: This week we have moved away from a story about or told by Jesus. Here, we are listening to John, a seasoned apprentice of Jesus, as he counsels and encourages a church to stay faithful to the message they have heard "from the beginning" (1 John 1:1), likely decades after Jesus has left. A false spiritual teaching has divided the church – a teaching that appears to permit sin and deny the reality of Jesus' incarnation. John's concern is that these believers would not be fooled by it, but would rather hold fast to the teachings about and of Jesus. This section of John's message gives some very practical direction for how to live that out together as believers. As I lead us through John's teaching, ask yourself this question: **Who or what do you relate to most in this teaching, and why?**

Tell the Story: The leader will tell 1 John 4:7-21 from memory. **Note:** *Since this is not a story as much as a teaching (and thus may be a bit more challenging to tell from memory, you might choose to just invite people to listen as you read it..*

Rebuild the Story: Let's open up our Bibles to 1 John 4:7-21.

- *Walk through, chronologically, verse by verse, asking "Who, What, Where, When, How, and sometimes Why" questions. Where did the leader add or omit details?*

Read the Story: Read the story in one translation. If you have time, you might choose to read a second translation as well.

Debrief the Story: Let's respond to the following questions:

- What do you relate to in the teaching, and why?
 - What questions arise for you out of what John teaches?
 - What vision or goal are the positive images in this story calling us toward?
 - What barriers to apprenticeship are exposed by the negative images in this story? What might Jesus (or John) point to as a barrier in my life?
 - What are the practical implications of what John teaches for our lives TODAY (not just in some future trial or challenge)?
 - How could this story be used to help someone else understand apprenticeship to Jesus?
 - How will you apply this story in your own life this week? What is your "take-away"?
 - What specific action do you sense God asking you/us to do as a result of our conversation with Him through his Word?
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Special Note: Apprentice Groups

This Sunday, our sermons will apply these teachings of John by introducing NLCC to the practice of "Apprentice Groups." An Apprentice Group is 2-5 peers of the same gender (possibly part of the same Life Group; 3 is ideal) who want to be intentional about growing and enduring as apprentices of Jesus. Like Jesus' "inner circle," these groups meet together every 1-2 weeks to encourage, keep accountable, and pray for one another. More information and helpful guides can be found on our website:

<https://www.nlcc.ca/pages/apprentice-groups>

- *How might a group like this be a help to applying what we have learned from John this week?*
- *What barriers might need to be overcome in order to make this a regular practice for your apprenticeship to Jesus?*
- *Is there anyone (perhaps even in this Life Group) with whom you could see yourself forming an Apprentice Group?*