

## Small Group Discussion Guide — June 20, 2021

- Series: Beholding Jesus
  - Sermon: Jesus the Friend
  - Scripture: John 15:12-17, Proverbs 18:24, Psalm 25:14, John 21:15-17
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### FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK

Did you sense Jesus confronting any particular area or situation in your life this week? If so, share how you interacted with Him in this and how He is moving you closer to Him.

### CONNECT

1. What stood out to you from this past week's service, and why?
2. Who is your oldest friend and how did you meet? Do you keep in touch with them today?

### ENGAGE

1. Read John 15:12-17.
  - What are some core components of friendship that you see in these verses?
  - Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you." How would you put into words some of the ways Jesus has loved us?
  - What are some of the ways it's different to be a friend than to be a servant?
  - How does it change your thinking about your relationship with Jesus to know that He did the choosing to begin that relationship, not you?
2. Read Psalm 25:14. How does the Lord confide in us? What does this teach us about real friendship?
3. Read John 21: 15-17. David explained how the Greek translation of this conversation between Jesus and Peter showed the rigor of honesty in their relationship.
  - Imagine you are Peter in these verses. How are you feeling as Jesus asks you the question about your love for him? How do you imagine Jesus was feeling to hear his answers?
  - What can you learn from this exchange in regard to your human friendships, and your friendship with Jesus?

### APPLY

1. David explained that looking at our relationship with Jesus as a friendship both normalizes it, and also "rigorizes" (challenges) it. What parts of being friends with Jesus seem normal and/or challenging to you, and why?
2. Consider the conversation between Peter and Jesus in John 21: 15-17. Now imagine that Jesus is asking you these same questions. Where are you now, in terms of authentic friendship with Jesus? Responding as honestly as you possibly can, complete this phrase: "From \_\_\_\_\_, to a faithful and true friendship with Jesus." Know that Jesus will meet you wherever you are, if you respond with honesty, sincerity, and a desire to grow closer to him.
3. To trust someone, you must know them, and getting to know someone takes time and intention. What are some practical ways you can get to know Jesus better this week? Think of some things (perhaps hidden away in your heart) that you can share with Jesus, to grow in your transparency and intimacy with him.

### PRAYER

Father, the idea that you would extend your hand to us not only in blessing but in real friendship is almost too good to imagine. Help us to know how fervently you want us to extend our hand back to you, and teach and guide us along the road of deepening friendship with you as we walk the days you've given us.

## **GOING DEEPER**

1. We often focus on what we get from our friendship with Jesus - how He can serve our needs and how we can depend on Him. Take some time to consider the flip side - are you a reliable friend to Jesus? In what ways can He depend upon you? How can you, like Peter, start where you are and grow in your friendship with Him?
2. David shared Five Gospel Principles for Friendship:
  - Friendship is the foundation, the core platform, of any vital personal relationship.
  - To succeed in life, resolve to learn how to be a good friend. Step 1 - become a good listener.
  - To be "successful" in friendships - we must be in them to give rather than to get.
  - Fruitfulness for Jesus, is the result of friendship with Jesus.
  - Make Jesus Christ your first, most intimate friend. From this center our lives grow toward inward and outward health.

Each morning this week, read this list and pray over it, and intentionally dedicate that day to living in authentic friendship with Jesus. Consider keeping a journal to note your experience as you journey deeper in your relationship with Him.

## **QUOTATIONS**

"Someday, somewhere, I am going to meet that person who really understands me - understands the words I speak and even the words I leave unspoken. The gospel proclaims that Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment of that dream."

*Brennan Manning*

"The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes when we discover that someone else believes in you and is willing to trust you."

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"Eros will have naked bodies; Friendship naked personalities."

*C. S. Lewis*