

Becoming Like Jesus: New Relating

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John 15:12-17

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Discussion and Reflection Guide

The way humans naturally do relationships leaves most of us lonely

Loneliness is the feeling that our connections to others are less than what we need.

*Would you say generally that relational satisfaction is trending up or down in our world? What are some factors that might be affecting that trend?

*What kind of problems can loneliness lead to?

*What are people typically looking for in friendship?

Becoming like Jesus means learning to be a good friend to others

Read and discuss John 15:12-17(NIV)

¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

*What do you see in this passage about the way Jesus thought about friendship?

*Why do you think he singles out friendship as the greatest version of love? What are the implications of this?

If you focus on trying to love broken humans well, you will find real friendship

Most of us are looking FOR good friends, Jesus was looking to BE a good friend.

*What is the big shift in this thinking?

*Why does focusing on finding people to love US well, leave us lonely? How have you found this to be true?

Jesus did not look to humans for things that only God could give him

Read and discuss John 17:20-23 (NIV)

²⁰ "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

*What does Jesus invite us to in this prayer?

*How does our security with God effect the way we relate to others? How could it empower us to love well?

*What is the Spirit saying to you about being a friend or living out of oneness with God?