

BIG IDEA

An apprentice of Jesus is committed to loving like Jesus.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 20:21-28, John 13:34-35

ICEBREAKER

When you find yourself in an argument, do you prefer to leave and resolve it later or stay settle it right away?

OPENING THOUGHT

Apprentices of Jesus are learning to love like Jesus. This inevitably brings us into closer connection with others. One of the by-products of apprenticing with Jesus is living in community with others. What are the joys and challenges of living in community?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Read John 13:34-35. Jesus said, “Everyone will know you are my disciples by your love.” What does it mean to love others and why is it so important to being an apprentice of Jesus?
2. The Christian tradition has long held to a theology of the Trinity, which says that God is one God revealed as three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore the fundamental nature of God is communal. Why is this important to us as we reflect on how to live in community with others?

LIFE APPLICATION

3. A recent Gallup Poll found that Americans are among the loneliest people in the world. Similarly, Dr. Vivek Murthy, Former Surgeon General said, “During my years caring for patients, the most common pathology I saw was not heart disease or diabetes: it was loneliness.” Do those statements surprise you? Why or why not?
4. Some of the barriers to connection are individualism, idealism, and intimidation. Which of those three are more of a challenge for you? Explain. (See the Leader’s Guide for more info on the three barriers to connection).
5. We may be tempted to bail on community when it gets hard. Yet when “we stay, we grow.” Where in your life do you want to “stay?”

CHALLENGE

Wrap up the group by reading the following statement by David Brooks and discussing how your group and our church can be a part of the rebalance he imagines: “We live in a culture of hyper-individualism. There is always a tension between self and society... Over the past sixty years we have swung too far toward the self. The only way out is to rebalance, to build a culture that steers people toward relation, community, and commitment – the things we most deeply yearn for, yet undermine with our hyper-individualistic way of life.” –David Brooks