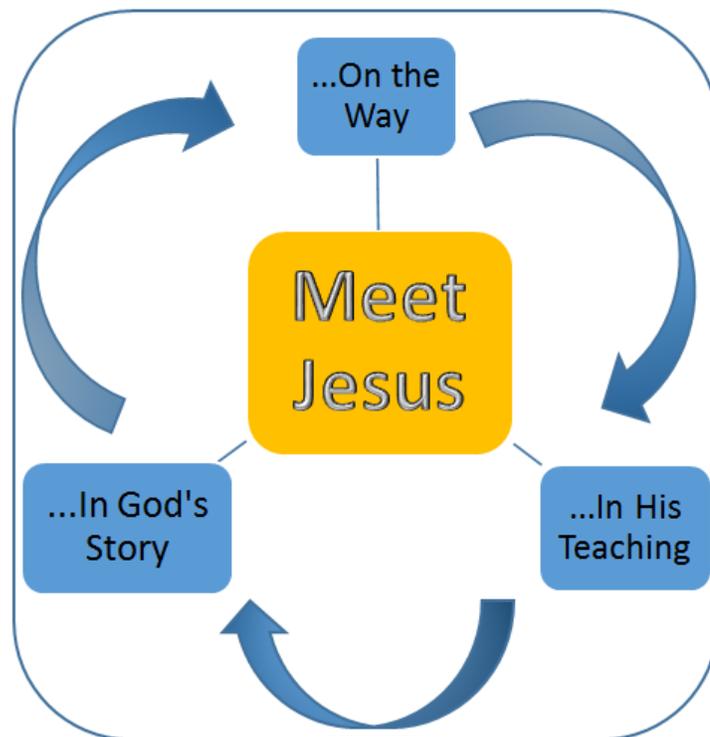


Meet JESUS

In His Teaching



Jim Fredericks

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. Quotes are from Jim Fredericks, “*Times of Refreshing*” **a topical read-along booklet**. Also, “*Foundation Stones*” is basic lessons I learned early in my Christian journey. This is available for a low cost on Amazon.com.

For additional **personal engagement**, I also wrote a number of 5-week booklet as read-alongs to expand our thinking and doing, all available as either free downloads at **JimFredericks.com**, under *Bible Resources*, *Freder’s Favorites*, or for a low price on Amazon.com, either paperback or Kindle.

When you finish these Bible studies in this “*Times of Refreshing for LifeChange*” series, I have also written other resources to support you as companions on your journey with Jesus. These are available at **JimFredericks.com**, including 5-week lessons designed as companions to guide you to the next level.

Copyright © 2017 by Jim Fredericks. All Rights Reserved by author; other resources also available as free downloads on my web site at **JimFredericks.com**. You are free to print, copy and paste this for non-commercial use. I only ask that you print the copyright notice with it, together with the location of my website and do not charge for anything except reproduction cost.

Welcome!

“Meet Jesus...” as we relate what the Bible says to our everyday lives in a natural, engaging, and empowering way. **“Come & See”** just as you are.

And it’s actually fun!

Our aim is to remove the artificial barriers people may have erected against looking together into the Bible. This is a welcoming, embracing, anyone-can-come group, whether casual observer or active participant. You set the level of involvement that you are comfortable with. Bring your inquisitive thinking so we can learn together.

The Bible is accessible for anyone with a desire to know what this popular book has to say, whether curiously exploring Christianity or young in their walk with Christ. This *“whole-person”* approach involves our inquisitive minds and our enlivened affections/emotions triggered by our sanctified imagination so we activate our will.

This is a safe place to ask questions on your heart. None are excluded.

In **“Meet Jesus...”**, we focus on the essential, growth-rich *ABC’s of our value and worth* interwoven throughout Scripture. Such a life is worthy of investing my all into. Now as we spend regular time in Scripture, each year becomes fifty-two weekly opportunities for LifeChange.

“God has not hidden truth from us, but for us to increase our delight in Him.” Ask any miner the effort needed to mine for silver or gold. Also ask if the return from the mother-lode is worth the effort. And God’s Word is the mother-lode of truth.

“If you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand...” (Proverbs 2:4).

Jim Fredericks

Yorba Linda, CA

ENGAGE with MARK 4:1-20 as if you were there.

As an introduction to this natural and engaging approach to learning from the Bible, please read “*Welcome*” on the previous page.

Like any great storyteller, Mark reveals Jesus gradually. Each part of the story Mark tells reveals a little more of who Jesus is and how He relates to people in need. Each storm is now an opportunity for God to do the impossible. News of Jesus spread like wildfire with crowds soon surging forward to see and hear Him. He emphasizes: it’s crucial **how** we listen to Jesus’ words of life.

In Mark 1:1-20, the seed is the Word of God sown into people with four different conditions of their heart in this season of life. *First*, along a trampled path; *second*, in shallow soil with rocks beneath the thin layer of soil; *third*, on busy, distracted soil; and *fourth*, on good soil. Listen attentively (4:9) so we actively persevere in **doing** it (Luke 8:15). Response to Scripture transforms us from the inside out.

Enter imaginatively into this story of the soils. You hold a special place in the heart of our tender-hearted Father, a place no one and nothing else can rival. This is truth, but are we able to embrace this astounding Reality for ourselves? This parable (a story with a pointed message) asks each of us to examine our receptivity to God’s Word for us. “*What is the state of my heart as I approach God’s Word?*” Cultivating the soil of our hearts takes hard work, like the patient gardener expends to till and cultivate His garden. Without the effort, the gardener could not enjoy the delicious produce.

 “*New beginnings excite me! The first snow of winter. The first flower of spring. The first day of retirement. [New] life in Christ creates something that never was before. This abundant life begins with a small seed of His life with limitless possibilities.*”
(Jim Fredericks, “*Times of Refreshing*”).

QUESTIONS for group dialog.

1. What differentiates each of the first three soils from one another?
2. What are the characteristics of the good soil? How can we cultivate this?
3. Using these four soils as a measuring rod, which soil would you say best represents your heart-receptiveness now? _____ Why?

DIALOG together in group this week.

- Relate what you are most grateful or thankful for today.
- Read the passage twice out loud, each reading a few verses.
- Retell: What does this say about God and about me?
- Request our caring Father to meet any specific personal need.

From MARK 4:1-20, what stirs your mind & affections?

4:1 Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. **2** He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: **3** "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. **4** As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. **5** Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. **6** But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7** Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. **8** Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times."

9 Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

10 When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. **11** He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables **12** so that,

"they may be ever seeing but never perceiving,
and ever hearing but never understanding;
otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!"

13 Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? **14** The farmer sows the word. **15** Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. **16** Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. **17** But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. **18** Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; **19** but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. **20** Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown."

How is God drawing me to live this out loud? *"I will..."*

ENGAGE with LUKE 6:27-42 as if you were there.

Everything about new life in Christ excites me...and challenges me. But have you felt that such a satisfying life may be out of **your** reach? *“Is it possible for me to experience such a life, knowing my back story?”* Jesus shouts a resounding *“YES!”* We must begin to see ourselves like He does and this begins with repentance, Spirit-initiated insight that leads to a changed perspective (Mark 1:15b). This fosters an internal change of mind so we respond to Jesus. In Jesus’ instructions, Jesus clarifies some changing values for those who learn to follow Him. Now we begin to see life more accurately through His eyes, if we respond to Jesus. Much of this is counter-cultural, yet dead on with how we would like others to treat us.

The two sweeping blessings in salvation are forgiveness (*“there is now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus,”* Romans 8:1) and abundant provision (*“through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death,”* Romans 8:2). Full and final forgiveness has been provided in Christ to free us from all judgment, guilt and condemnation. All these came because of our separation from God beginning at the Fall in Genesis 3. All are removed instantly through faith in Christ. Jesus Christ died and was raised to life, and is now praying for us. Who can then possibly justly condemn us (Rom. 8:34)? Learn to forgive others and stop judging, or we block the second blessing. God delights to pour out His blessings.

 *“Through faith in Christ, we are so fully and finally forgiven that the Bible pushes language to its limits to describe this blessing....This freedom then shatters the vice-like hold that guilt’s “cousins” (fear of condemnation, shame, self-loathing, or the opposite, lethargy) had exerted on us in the past to prevent us from embracing God’s loving initiative” (Jim Fredericks, “Times of Refreshing”).*

QUESTIONS for group dialog.

1. What difference do you see between how Jesus tells us to love in 6:27-36 and how many people we rub shoulders with each day see their own lives?
2. How does verse 6:38 impact you, recognizing that it refers to judging, condemning and forgiving (6:37)?
3. What do you think Jesus means by this parable in 6:41-42?

DIALOG together in group this week.

- Relate what you are most grateful or thankful for today.
- Read the passage twice out loud, each reading a few verses.
- Retell: What does this say about God and about me?
- Request our caring Father to meet any specific personal need.

From LUKE 6:27-42, what stirs your mind & affections?

6:27-42 27 “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32 “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

37 “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

39 He also told them this parable: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit? 40 The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.

41 “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 42 How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

How is God drawing me to live this out loud? *"I will...."*

ENGAGE with MATT. 18:21-35 as if you were there.

So now that we have embraced the unchanging Reality that in Christ we are fully and forever forgiven, “*forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you*” (Ephesians 4:32, **emphasis**) is next. Why can you and I as God’s people forgive others who have attacked us unjustly and caused us such horrible pain and agony? *Because we have been so freely and fully forgiven in Christ* for everything.

How forgiven are you in Christ? Then forgive others to the **same** degree. Yes, this is tough at times...but your spiritual growth hinges on this, even though it cuts across the grain of our self-life. To refuse reveals a distorted view of God and how He fashioned you. Our personal growth is fueled by taking on the full extent of the debt of those who sinned against us and releasing this debt at the cross.

Jesus had just spoken about the restoration process when a brother personally sins against us (18:15-20). Peter found this difficult, like many of us. So he asked Jesus for specific limits on how often we must forgive others. Jewish convention was 3 times. So Peter seemed to look good when he proposed 7 times. Instead, Jesus instructs His people to forgive an unlimited number of times (“7 times 7”). Then the great storyteller tells a parable, a memorable story with an unexpected twist in order to drive truth home. Imaginatively place yourself in the story teaching forgiveness as *cancellation of debt*. How does this touch your mind and your affections/emotions?

📖 “*Forgive others from your heart, from the core of who you are. We may say, ‘I can’t let this perpetrator off my hook because he hurt me so badly.’ [Don’t] pretend. Nobody has really forgiven another without acknowledging the deep pain involved. Until we grieve the loss, forgive, carry the debt to the cross, and fully release that person, he will continue to hurt us*” (“Times of Refreshing”).

QUESTIONS for group dialog.

1. What can you learn about the king in the parable from his response (34)?
2. How would you compare and contrast the king's response with the servant's response?
3. What do you think Jesus means by His Father’s response in 35?

DIALOG together in group this week.

- Relate what you are most grateful or thankful for today.
- Read the passage twice out loud, each reading a few verses.
- Retell: What does this say about God and about me?
- Request our caring Father to meet any specific personal need.

From MATTHEW 18:21-35, what stirs your mind & affections?

18:21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

How is God drawing me to live this out loud? *"I will...."*

ENGAGE with LUKE 15:1-31 as if you were there.

Because of past experiences, you may know friends who have come to the Christian life with little realistic aspiration of being wanted or desired by God. Perhaps your friend is simply happy not to be hated or hurt by Him. This abundant life and full forgiveness available in Christ almost seems like a fantasy, perhaps for others, yet inaccessible for someone like your friend. Even the religious leaders of the day had similar small, counterfeit thoughts. They grumbled again because Jesus reached out to welcome the unwanted. Like those today, the leaders had a small answer to *“What is our Father like?”*

Place yourself in the story. We only begin to understand God’s offer of forgiveness and life to the full through faith in Jesus when we know our heavenly Father. So Jesus gives us a story in three parts to tell us: *“This is what My Father is like”* (Luke 15:1-2). *“My Father welcomes you and your friends with embracing arms, with an unquenchable love, and with ongoing acceptance.”* Soak in Jesus’ answer in the parable, a story with a pointed message. This is an accurate picture of your caring and compassionate Father with His arms outstretched to welcome, embrace and care. Destroy any other photos of previous Father-misconceptions. Our heavenly Father seeks what has been lost and joyfully restores each to its original purpose.

 *“Have we, though, fully embraced our own God-given forgiveness? The Father’s caring, compassionate arms stretch wide toward us, as wide as Jesus’ arms on the cross. Despite Christ’s amazing provision, God’s people still sometimes experience a difficult time personally embracing what God has done for us. [We] listen to our enemy, the devil, who accuses us day and night (Revelation 12:10). [Instead,] send our Advocate to answer the door (1 Jn 2:1-2)”*
(Jim Fredericks, “Times of Refreshing”).

QUESTIONS for group dialog.

1. What similar responses do you see in the shepherd with the *one* lost sheep, the women with the *one* lost silver and the Father with the *two* lost sons?
2. In the last part of verse 20, what is the heart-attitude of the father?
3. How would you feel about a Father like Jesus reveals here?

DIALOG together in group this week.

- Relate what you are most grateful or thankful for today.
- Read the passage twice out loud, each reading a few verses.
- Retell: What does this say about God and about me?
- Request our caring Father to meet any specific personal need.

From [Luke 15:1-31](#), what stirs your mind & affections?

15:1 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

3 Then Jesus told them this parable: 4 “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

8-12 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ 20 So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. 21 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

25 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

28 “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

31 “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

How is God drawing me to live this out loud? *"I will...."*

ENGAGE with LUKE 14:15-35 as if you were there.

In these two parables, Jesus teaches two powerful points. First, the way *in*, God's passionate heart to include **all** people in the benefits of life together with Him (14:15-24). Our God is a welcoming and restoring, embracing and inclusive God. He offers life to the full to **all**, though some refuse to come to Him. Jesus never turned away a willing person. Check it out for yourself in the Gospels if you question this. Jesus came to reveal His Father. What Jesus reveals shatters the stereotypes and caricatures that seem common in society. God is no mere cosmic Judge, waiting to bust us and take away our fun. Jesus came to release life to the full (John 10:10b).

Second, the way *on*, wholehearted allegiance to Him, which releases what is our highest and best (14:25-35). *All* are invited. *Some* come to Him for this abundant life and *others* refuse, settling where they are. Full life does not depend on favorable circumstances. Adam and Eve acted on their own terms in Genesis 3, and missed life. Certainly the cost of discipleship is *high*. Yet the cost of **non-**discipleship is far higher. What unimaginable loss! Nothing can be compared to enjoying the sweetness in Jesus' presence, even in pain and loss. And true discipleship is also *simple*. Jesus only wants one thing...your whole life. Consider the claims Jesus makes in the Gospels. He is either a *liar* (deliberately deceiving), a *lunatic* (self-deceived), or the *Lord* of all as He claims. Jesus does not leave open the possibility of being merely a good man, great teacher, or miracle worker. My response is, "*I'm all-in, Jesus.*" What's your choice?



"How can we be satisfied with a mouthful of brackish water when this great, good and generous relational God is a Niagara Falls of refreshment, 'the spring of living water'? This God designed us to drink deeply and completely from our true Source of life. He brings 'times of refreshing.'" (Jim Fredericks, "Times of Refreshing").

QUESTIONS for group dialog.

1. How would you briefly summarize what Jesus teaches in Luke 14:15-24?
2. What do you think the three "cannot be my disciple" statements encompass in our lives (Luke 14:25-35)?
3. What do you think Jesus means by using the analogy of salt in verses 34-35??

DIALOG together in group this week.

- Relate what you are most grateful or thankful for today.
- Read the passage twice out loud, each reading a few verses.
- Retell: What does this say about God and about me?
- Request our caring Father to meet any specific personal need.

From LUKE 14:15-35, what stirs your mind & affections?

14:15 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.”

16 Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. 17 At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’

18 “But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’

19 “Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’

20 “Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’

21 “The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’

22 “‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’

23 “Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. 24 I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’”

25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26 “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. 27 And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

28 “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? 29 For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, 30 saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’

31 “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. 33 In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

34 “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? 35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out.

“Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

How is God drawing me to live this out loud? *"I will...."*

Our Father is...

Here are a few verses about the Father from the seventh chapter in my book, *"Big God! Bold Design, Book 2"* from my website: JimFredericks.com. Read the four verses below and briefly summarize. The other verses are for your leisure to deepen our love and appreciation for our caring Father.

1. Matthew 7:9-11

2. Luke 15:20

3. John 10:28-29

4. Romans 8:32

Romans 8:29-30; Romans 8:31; Romans 8:33-34; Romans 8:35-37; Romans 8:38-39; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Philippians 1:4; Philippians 2:13; Philippians 4:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 12:5-11; James 1:17

Who is our Father to you?

Thoughts

Jesus' Seven "I AM" Assertions

1. *"I am the Bread of Life"* (John 6:35).

2. *"I am the Light of the World"* (John 8:12).

3. *"I am the Gate for My Sheep"* (John 10:7).

4. *"I am the Good Shepherd"* (John 10:11).

5. *"I am the Resurrection and the Life"* (John 11:25).

6. *"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life"* (John 14:6).

7. *"I am the True Vine"* (John 15:1).

Who is Jesus to you?

Thoughts

For the Group Leaders

Please remember that these groups are not designed for directive teaching, like many of us have been taught. Additionally, I have come to believe that the highest act of teaching is *drawing out* of others what is in them. Then, and only as necessary, *putting in* or *telling*. These studies are not about what you can pass on, but more of what you can encourage in others.

As a group, we want to help each other overcome any barriers that might hinder us from sharing this good news with family and friends. We will ask each person how they intend to respond each week, “*I will...*” statements. Then next week we will follow up, reinforcing this fruitful “*teaching to obey*” response that is so crucial for our flourishing growth.

Active participation switches on our natural desire to learn. So an important responsibility for those who lead is to provide space for each person to learn. Therefore, we want to pass the group leadership around after the leader models a couple weeks. The brief intro can be read before the passage to give the group a focus. The three questions can be used to stimulate mutual dialog (or bring your own). Also, encourage each to put what they think the passage is saying in their own words. Since we are not the “answer man,” when a group leader is asked what the passage means, we will often turn this around by asking: “*What do you think it means?*”

Our learning accelerates as we respond to what we are learning. This is especially true when we share with someone we know about what we have learned this week. Even though the group will be asked to put truth into action, and pass it along to one person they know, each member is still free to choose his/her own level of involvement. Each is most welcome to come and be with us whatever the level of involvement. It’s crucial to provide space for each person to grow at their own rate since each is a unique individual. As group leaders, be sure to provide the space each one needs. Additional teaching tips available on my website under the “*For Teachers*” tab.

Jim Fredericks
Yorba Linda, CA

Dedication:

My heartfelt thanks goes out to those over the years who have been God’s instruments in my spiritual growth. They have grown alongside me in community-learning groups that are intent on multiplying disciples, that is, learners and followers of Jesus. Thanks for your love, honest openness, and willingness to let me use you as human guinea pigs in experimenting over the years to multiply disciples in a “*whole-person*” approach that respects both individual responsibility and community mutuality. I have a passion to be one a guide on our Christian journey, and to release the sleeping giant within. In addition to the “*Meet Jesus...*” series, this is why I have written a series of eight 5-week “*Building Blocks*” on these essentials for our Christian journey. As special thanks to Pastor Jamie Gillentine for his vision to keep the format simple and reproducible.

Additional Resources Available

When you complete this “*Meet Jesus...*” 5-week study, **free** PDF downloads for the other two in the “*Meet Jesus...*” series are available on my web site @ **JimFredericks.com** under the “*Engage God’s Love-Letter*” tab. -friendly resources. Also, “*Companion toward LifeChange*” has eight 5-week next-level user-friendly studies to build key books solidly into our lives.

Jim Fredericks

Web site: JimFredericks.com

E-mail: partnering247@yahoo.com