

FEARLESS CONVERSATION™

**WHY IS
JESUS SO
RADICAL?**

DISCUSSIONS FROM
MATTHEW AND LUKE

LEADER GUIDE

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might not be aware of every bit of knowledge he's given us, but it's something we don't have to actively learn or experience. He gifts it to us, and it's as if we know it by intuition. The other kind of knowing (*nous*) is what we acquire by learning. We have to experience it somehow—through hearing, reading, doing, and so on—in order to gain the knowledge. Just because we know *about* Jesus doesn't mean we *know* Jesus.

How do you know him?

After Jesus called his disciples and they responded immediately by following him, Jesus proceeded to continue ministering to people throughout Galilee, teaching, proclaiming, and healing.

• **What does the variety of Jesus' actions and interactions in Matthew 4:18-25 tell you about his ministry, and what it might look like for you to follow Jesus?**

people to share their thoughts with the rest of the group. Be sure to thank people for being fearless in their conversation.

GROWING

It's great to have these conversations and really dig into what the Bible says. This helps us

move into greater understanding of God and grow in our relationship with God. One way we see that growth is through applying what we've discovered to our lives. God intends us to learn from what we read; he teaches us about himself, and he teaches us about ourselves.

BEHIND THE SCENES

When Jesus commanded Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow him, it wasn't a passive invitation; they left what they knew to follow him. They wanted to know. Jesus wouldn't just teach them what he knew; he taught them who he was. Following him involved more than accompanying him; it required sacrifice and commitment. It required setting themselves aside and emulating Jesus.

"Then he said to them all: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it'" (Luke 9:23-24).

BEHIND THE SCENES

Matthew tells us that the first disciples immediately followed Jesus when he called them. But that immediate response to Jesus' calling didn't mean that they followed him without questions or problems. Far from it. In fact, the Gospels indicate that the disciples wrestled with their commitment, even after Jesus' resurrection from death. Even at the end of Matthew, the 11 remaining disciples

went to the mountain where Jesus told them to meet him. When they got there, “they worshipped him; but some doubted” (Matthew 28:17). Nonetheless, Jesus commissioned the disciples to go and make disciples of all nations.

How has a mixture of belief and doubt marked your own discipleship?

Let’s revisit our reaction time experience and try it again. But this time we’ll add a new element. The person who is dropping the ruler will give their partner a clue about when he or she will drop the ruler. The person dropping the ruler decides what it will be. It might be a simple sound, such as a snap or phrase, or it might be a 3-2-1 countdown. It’s up to the person dropping the ruler to decide. Let your partner know what it is and try it a couple times, recording reaction times. Then switch places, again letting the person dropping the ruler decide what the clue will be. Once you’ve recorded two reaction times for each person, rejoin your small group of four and briefly share your experience.

- **How has your reaction time changed, and why?**

Allow about 5 minutes, giving a 1-minute alert. Then continue.

Following Jesus requires knowing Jesus. Knowing Jesus includes taking time for a relationship with him and looking to him for leadership. As the disciples model for us, following requires a response. Consider your reaction time to God.

- **How would you describe your reaction time to God? What influences how quickly you respond to God?**

Invite everyone to write their reflections in the space provided in their participant guides. Let them know there is one more question for them there as well—they should go ahead and read and reflect on that one too.

Allow time for people to adequately reflect and journal, then close with a prayer, thanking God that we can approach him and each other without fear and trust him to provide and guide through everyday life.