

Jesus: Our Model for Manhood

Men's Group Bible Study Series

In Jesus' relationship with the Father, we see the kind of relationship we can have with God and also see the true model for our manhood. Intimacy, dependency, obedience, and authority mark Jesus' relationship with the Father.

Here are eight Bible studies for your use in Men's Group. There are two studies each on the topics of intimacy, dependency, obedience, and authority. These studies can be used in a group setting for 30 minutes so you will still have ample time for worship and ministry time. Although each of the studies could go longer, try to allot enough time for prayer ministry. Your men will want to meet God as a response to these Scriptures!

For preparation to lead these studies, it's a good idea to use them first during your quiet time devotions, letting God teach you and lead you personally.

In each study, the leader's notes and comments are in italics.

May God use His Word and use you as you lead your men!

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Study #1 – INTIMACY: Part 1 – John 17:1—12

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Jesus is intimate with the Father. Many other models of manhood lack intimacy, confusing it with weakness or emotionalism. John Wimber, the founder of the Vineyard movement, said that intimacy comes from self-disclosure. For Jesus, it's a two-way street: He self-discloses to the Father and the Father self-discloses to the Son.

1. Opening Question: When you hear the word “intimacy,” what first comes to mind? What comes to mind when you think of an “intimate relationship”? Be honest!

John 17 is one of the most outstanding passages in the Bible because we get to look inside and eavesdrop on a conversation (prayer) that Jesus, the Son of God, has with God the Father. Here we have an up close view into the nature of the relationship between God the Son and God the Father!

Let's read John 17:1—12 aloud. As we read these verses, try to picture in your mind what this relationship between Jesus and the Father looks like.

2. List all of the verbs (*action words*) Jesus uses in His prayer. Which verbs are repeated, and how often? What do the verbs Jesus uses tell you about the type of relationship He has with the Father?
3. The word “give” is repeated 10 times. What kind of giving is going on between Jesus and the Father?
4. Look at verses 11—12. How are we protected and kept safe? How does God's Name (*His character, His essential nature*) protect us? According to Jesus, the result of God's protection is that we can be one as Jesus and the Father are one. What does that mean for us?
5. Look at verses 1—4.
 - What time has come for Jesus (v. 1)? (*What is Jesus going to do right after this prayer?*)
 - Why does the time of His death glorify (*honor, increase the reputation of*) God (vv. 2—3)?
 - What is “eternal life” in its essence (v. 3)? Describe it.
 - How did Jesus increase the reputation of the Father (v. 4)?
6. What area in your life has God given you a work to do that you need to complete in order to glorify Him? What do the words Jesus uses in His prayer say about the kind of close relationship you can have with God your Heavenly Father? Which of these words would you want to increasingly describe your relationship with God?

Study #2 – INTIMACY: Part 2 – John 17:13—26

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1. Opening Question: What's so good about intimacy? What benefits are there in being intimate?

In John 17:13—26, we will see what some of the benefits are of being intimate with God, by experiencing the things God says and does with us. Let's read John 17:13—26 aloud. As we do, try to tick off in your mind some of the benefits of intimacy with God.

2. List some of the benefits of being close and intimate with God. (They include: full measure of joy -13, protection from Satan -15, sanctified by truth -17, oneness -21, given God's glory -22, and loved by God like He loves Jesus -23, 26.)
3. Let's look at some of these benefits one by one:
 - Describe the joy Jesus speaks about (v. 13). Where does it come from?
 - What does it mean to be sanctified (*set apart by God for close relationship with Him*) by the truth (v. 17)? Why is the truth so important? How do lies and cover-ups with God block connection with God? Is the same true in relationships with others? Why?
 - What does this oneness look like (vs. 21—23)? What is the result of this oneness (vv. 21b, 23)? How does God giving us His glory (His *honor and reputation*) then give us the capability of being one with God (v. 22)?
 - The Love God the Father has for Jesus is the Love He has for us (vv. 23, 26)! What's the significance of this for you?
4. Think about Jesus' prayer that we be sanctified (*set apart for relationship with the Father*) by the truth. Is there any area of your life where Jesus is calling you to be truthful with Him so that He can be close to you?
5. How can the qualities of intimacy we've looked at affect our relationships with others? Our wives? Our families? Our brothers in the Lord? How would you like to experience more openness and closeness with others?

Study #3 – DEPENDENCY: Part 1 – Matthew 3:13—17

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Dependency means complete submission to God's will and authority in our lives. Jesus was dependent on the Father not in a neurotic, immature manner but rather in a healthy way. A man's healthy dependency upon God creates in him a deep sense of acceptance, independence in facing the world, and interdependence in core Christian relationships.

Let's read out loud Matthew 3:1—3, 11—12, and 13—17. Take note of the timing of the events and everything that surrounds them.

1. What is John the Baptist's baptism like?
2. Why does Jesus come to the Jordan River?
3. What is John's reaction to Jesus' desire to be baptized? Why does he react this way?
4. How does Jesus respond to John? What motivates Jesus' to be baptized?
5. What happens next? What is the outcome of Jesus' submission to His Father's will?
6. Look at verse 17. What results in our relationship with God when we submit to Him?
7. What can you learn in the passage about submission to God's plan?
What area is God asking you to submit to Him?

Study #4 – DEPENDENCY: Part 2 – John 5:1—20

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As we read John 5:1—20, imagine that you are a bystander watching all of these events unfold and hearing everything Jesus says.

1. Summarize in your own words what happens in this passage.
2. Why does Jesus decide to go to Jerusalem? What happens to the man who is blind after Jesus heals him?
3. Why is it difficult for the man who is healed to answer the Jewish leaders' question to him in verse 12?
4. What occurs between Jesus and the man when Jesus later finds him?
5. Why do the leaders persecute Jesus? How does Jesus respond to their accusations?
6. Look at verses 19—20. On what basis is Jesus able to do what He does? What qualities are there in His interaction with His Father that enable Him to do the things He does?
7. What can you apply personally from this passage? On what basis can you do the works of God, too? How can you grow in these areas? How can you “see what the Father is doing” even more clearly?

Study #5 – OBEDIENCE: Part 1 – John 14:21, 23—27

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1. Opening Question: When you hear the word “obedience,” what comes to mind? Be honest! (*Bondage? Restriction? Limits? Or Freedom?*)

In John 14, Jesus is with His disciples in the Upper Room where they celebrated the Passover. He now continues to prepare His disciples for His imminent departure. Much has been building up to this final evening, including an increasing rejection and hostility towards Jesus by the Jewish authorities, Christ's own prediction of His death and resurrection, His prediction of His betrayal by Judas, and His prediction that Peter would deny Him that very night. Knowing how His friends felt, Jesus teaches and encourages them with the words, “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (John 14:1). Our passage falls within this discourse.

As we read John 14:21, 23—27 out loud, do your best to put yourselves in the shoes of the disciples.

2. What do you sense Jesus' attitude is towards His disciples?
3. How would you explain the connection between love and obedience that Christ speaks of throughout this chapter (vv. 21, 23)?
4. Building upon this connection between love and obedience, let's look at two related passages in 1 John: 1 John 4:18—19 and 1 John 5:3—4a. What does each passage add? How do they expand our understanding of love and obedience?

1 John 5:3—4a – “This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world.”

1 John 4:18—19 – “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.”

Using your own words, how would you summarize these three passages in a short sentence? What is the main point?

5. How do we as Jesus' followers today experience His love and help?

Although Jesus had repeatedly told His disciples that He must leave soon (John 13:33; John 14:2, 12, 18), He promised that the Father would send them “another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth” (14:16). In the Greek, “another” means of the same kind (not of a different kind). And “Counselor” literally means a person summoned to one's aid. In essence, the Father would be sending them another person of the same nature that would help them.

6. In verse 26, Jesus specifically says that the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, will “teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” How does this function of the Holy Spirit operate in your life, especially in the area of obedience?
7. In what areas of your life are you currently struggling to obey Jesus? Choose one struggle you are facing. What difference can you ask the Holy Spirit to make in your life this week?

Study #6 – OBEDIENCE: Part 2 – Hebrews 12:1—7

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As we read Hebrews 12:1—7, pay close attention to the particular word pictures that the author uses.

1. Using Paul's imagery of someone straining to finish a race, what are we to do in response to the faithful witness of Christ and others who have preceded us?
2. How do you see sin entangling and hindering you as you run the race? All of us have certain areas in our lives in which we find it particularly difficult to obey God. What underlying beliefs about God are at the core of these struggles?
3. Look at verses 2 and 3. What are we told about Jesus? How does Jesus' life serve as an example for us?
4. In verses 5—7, what do we learn about the heart of our Father?
5. How do you typically respond to the Lord's discipline, which He may express to us either through His Spirit's internal conviction or through external trials? Why?
6. According to verses 5—7, what should our attitude be towards the Lord's discipline?
7. How does God want us to view obedience, in light of His love for us—expressed in His unrelenting commitment to make us holy, and His certain promises of living with Him for eternity?
8. How has our discussion suggested areas in your life the Lord might want you to work on? How can we pray for you about these things?

Study #7 – AUTHORITY: Part 1 – John 2:13—25

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Authority is the rightful, unimpeded power to act, possess, control, use, or dispose of something or somebody. Relating with God in the way Jesus does gives us enormous authority. But we must imitate Jesus' servant heart, not lord it over others. And also like Jesus, we are to use His authority to advance His kingdom: to witness, love the poor, cast out demons, heal the sick, and in other ways restore this fallen creation in anticipation of the final restoration.

Imagine that you are a man witnessing the events recorded here as we read out loud John 2:13—25.

1. What is going on all around you in this situation?
2. For background, let's read Isaiah 56:7—8:
"These I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." The Sovereign Lord declares – he who gathers the exiles of Israel: "I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered."

Given the context of Isaiah 56:7—8, why do you think Jesus does what He does in John 5:15—16?
3. Look at the Jews' demand in verse 18. What's another word for "authority" that they could have used in their demand?
4. How does Jesus answer them (v. 19)? Why were the Jews confused by Jesus answer? (*He referred to His body as the Temple of God.*) What does Jesus' statement in verse 19 say about His view of Himself?
5. Look at verse 19 and Jesus' explanation in verses 21—22. How do these words answer the Jews' demands for proof of His rightful power to clear out the temple? (*Jesus' own death and resurrection demonstrate His full obedience to the Father, giving Him the right to do what He did.*)
6. What, therefore, is the basis for Jesus' right to have authority over our lives? Why does His death and resurrection give Him rightful power to possess and control us?
7. Describe what the scene in verses 15 and 16. (*It must have been chaotic, out of control, noisy, and wild!*) Is there any similarity to this when Christ wants to do something in your life? Is there any specific area that Christ wants cleared out of you this week?

Study #8 – AUTHORITY: Part 2 – John 5:16—30

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John 5:16—30 happens immediately after Jesus heals a man who has been unable to walk for 38 years. Jesus heals him on the Sabbath, a day for worship and rest. Let's read out loud John 5:16—30. Imagine the scene and emotions expressed.

1. Why do the people want to kill Jesus? (He is *breaking the Sabbath – v. 16, and making Himself equal with God –v. 18.*)
2. Now look over each of the following verses and pull out reasons why Jesus has the authority (*the lawful right, the unimpeded power*) to do what He does:
 - Verse 19 (*He does only what He sees the Father doing.*)
 - Verse 20 (*The Father loves Him.*)
 - Verse 21 (*Jesus has the same right to give life.*)
 - Verses 22, 27(*He has the right to judge.*)
 - Verses 24—26 (*Jesus has the power to grant life.*)
 - Verse 30 (*His motive is to please God the Father.*)
3. What does doing the work of the kingdom involve? (*It includes sharing the Good News of Jesus, loving others, praying for the sick, casting out demons, feeding the poor, teaching, and showing others how to obey everything Jesus commanded.*)
4. Look at verses 19 and 30. Can we pull from these verses anything that would help us or authorize us to do kingdom work? In other words, according to this passage, *why* can we, and *how* should we do kingdom work?
5. How are you presently engaged in God's kingdom work? How can you utilize more fully the authority Jesus has given us to serve in His Name?