

INTEGRITY

Living the Truth

10 STUDIES FOR INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS



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IVP Connect

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1

Imitate Jesus

Mark 10:32-45

WWJD? We see it on bracelets, headbands, socks and hair ribbons. Why? What are people asking themselves with these four letters? For some it is a mere fashion statement—soon faded. But for many it is a minute-to-minute reminder: *What Would Jesus Do?* The phrase comes from Charles Sheldon's 1897 novel in which a small-town pastor, shaken by a dying unemployed tramp, leads his congregation to live a year based on that question. The theme of Sheldon's novel echoes, in turn, the writing of fifteenth-century monk Thomas à Kempis in *The Imitation of Christ*. Imitating Jesus has been a centuries-long goal of Christians pursuing integrity. Christ himself issued the invitation.

GROUP DISCUSSION. What would Jesus do? Describe one situation where someone you know followed that standard. What risks did that person take?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Take time to reflect on the character of Jesus Christ. (Page through the gospels, if this helps trigger ideas.) Make a list of several qualities that are part of his character. Note also some of his actions that reflected those qualities.

Imitating Jesus was no simple matter—even when he was here in person. *Read Mark 10:32-45.*

1. This scene includes a variety of people. What differing pictures did they hold of the future?

2. Verse 32 speaks of the followers of Jesus as being both “astonished” and “afraid.” What reasons did they have for feeling each of these emotions (vv. 32-34)?

3. If you had been there, how do you think you would have responded to Christ's words of verses 33-34?

4. What does the request of verse 37 suggest about the values held by James and John?

5. How do people today express similar values?

6. In what ways are you like (or not like) James and John in this setting?

7. To “drink the cup I drink” meant to share a person’s fate. What did Jesus promise—and not promise (vv. 39-40)? Why?

8. Study Jesus’ words in verses 42-45. How does Jesus’ view of greatness differ from what you normally see?

9. “Not so with you,” pronounces Jesus after he has described the normal leadership styles of his day. What pressures do you face to lead in the way that Christ rejects?

10. Jesus creates his own definition of greatness in verses 43-45. In view of what you know of the life and works of Jesus, in what ways did he live out that description?

11. How would greatness, as it is described here by Jesus, look in your church?

in your family?

in your school or workplace?

12. Pick a troubling situation in your family, church, school or workplace. To the best of your understanding, what would Jesus do in that situation?

How might you imitate him there—as you pursue the goal of integrity?

Pray to Jesus, thanking him for particular actions and character qualities that serve as a guide to you. Then bring to him specific situations where you want to imitate him, and ask for his help in doing so.

Now or Later

“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). Picture your future as it is described here, and thank God for what you see.

“Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure” (1 John 3:3). What are some ways that you could begin now to become more like that future person? Ask God’s help in moving that direction.