

How to Express Jesus – November 10 & 11, 2018
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Exodus 31:1-6

- Whom has God chosen (1-2)? What has he poured into him (3)? For what purpose (4-5)? God filled Bezalel with the Holy Spirit – one of the very first times he does so in scripture – primarily in order to make things beautiful. What does this communicate about who God is and how he wants us to express Jesus to the world?
- Whom has God appointed to help Bezalel (6)? What has he done for the skilled workers (6)? What did he command the people to make (7-11)? Picture these items as crafted with incredible beauty being the goal. What textures, colors, attention to detail, etc. do you see? What is God's response to them? And yours?
- Which aspects of your life are akin to Bezalel and company's vocation? How do you make things beautiful? What about creative people you know; what beauty do they bring to the world? Ask the Lord to speak to you about the importance of this work, and pray he'd bless all who engage in it.

Day Two: Psalm 19:1-6

- What do "the heavens" communicate about the Lord (1-2)? Glory – the very best of God – is found in "the work of his hands." Look around you: what is declaring his glory? What do these glimpses inspire you to do? What creative "best" can you contribute?
- How do inanimate objects manage to "declare" God's glory (3-4)? Unlike these components of creation, *you* have many ways to create and express beauty: with your mind, your words, your hands, etc. With so many methods, what do you want to declare about the Lord? And who do you want to hear this declaration?
- What is the sun like (5)? Describe its movement (4, 6). What experiences its warmth (6)? What analogies would you use to describe other beautiful aspects of creation? What about beautiful things created by followers of Jesus – what are they like, and what do they testify to the world about God?

Day Three: Matthew 5:13-16

- What does Jesus proclaim about his followers (13)? In your own words, how would you describe salt? What purpose does it serve? Imagine salt without its saltiness; would it have any function at all? In what ways are you like salt? What flavor do you bring out in the people and places surrounding you? Bringing out the best in people is a work of beauty. At the same time, how does it express Jesus to them? Pray that wherever you go, you'd be salt.
- How else does Jesus describe believers (14)? What are some things we do with light (14-15)? What role does light play in making things beautiful? When we shine our light, what do people see (16)? How do we hope they will respond (16)? Consider the message your deeds send to the world. Ask God to help you fine tune your deeds so as to better express Jesus.

Day Four: John 8:21-47

- Contrast Jesus' trajectory with that of his listeners (21-24). Imagine being told by him that "you will die in your sin." How was Jesus able to always speak the truth, even when it might hurt?
- What did Jesus say about himself and the Father (25-29)? How did some react (30)? Why do you think some found Jesus trustworthy, while others did not? What did Jesus

say specifically to these brand-new believers (31-32)? Truth brings freedom, and Jesus is the source of both. Today, and throughout this week, what freedom-bringing truth-telling does God want you to do?

- Why did these followers balk at Jesus' talk of freedom (33)? Summarize what Jesus wants them to understand (34-47). With a truthful take on heritage and the lies one chooses to believe, Jesus didn't hold back. Why do you think he took this approach? Where are you holding back when you ought to be a truth-teller instead? Ask Jesus to help you tell the truth.

Day Five: Ephesians 2:14-18

- Who is Jesus, and what has he done (14-15)? Known by many names and attributes, how does it feel to call Jesus "our peace"? What does it inspire you to do? While Paul wrote about hostility between Jews and Gentiles, what walls divide people today? What is one way you can partner with Jesus to dismantle them?
- What was Jesus' purpose (15-16)? All hope centers on him and his work on the cross. This may seem foreign or even offensive to some people in your circle. Ask God to give you some natural and incremental ideas for expressing Jesus and his peace-making power to the skeptics in your life. What is he speaking?
- Whom did Jesus preach peace to (17)? What made it possible for him to preach this message to both Jews and Gentiles, and for each respective group to be able to receive it (18)? May this "one Spirit" fill you with open-heartedness and a desire to preach peace and make peace in all circumstances.