John 16 ENGAGE FELLOWSHIP

"Jesus replied, 'Now you finally believe in me." (John 16:31)

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John 16 illustrates the Jesus strategy for relational legacy: belong, become and believe. If we reverse this order, we might face challenges to leaving a relational legacy. First, we might seek to defend the truth more than demonstrate it. Second, we might try to explain more than express. Finally, we might seek to impress others, rather than impart life to them.

Let's consider how we might lead as Jesus led by creating a relational legacy.

- **Belonging.** *"You will go directly to the Father and ask him for anything you desire and he will give it to you, because of your relationship with me" (John 16:23).* Jesus invites and includes His disciples to do life together—imparting life and love to them.
- **Becoming.** *"Until now you've not been bold enough to ask the Father for a single thing in my name, but now you can ask, and keep on asking him! And you can be sure that you'll receive what you ask for, and your joy will have no limits!" (John 16:24).* Jesus models an instinctive, attractive and contagious lifestyle to His disciples.
- **Believing.** *"Jesus replied, 'Now you finally believe in me'" (John 16:31).* The disciples of Jesus believe in Him as the Spirit makes Him known

Pause and assess how you and your team are leading others in…

- **Belonging** to a community of Jesus followers. Within your group, is there freedom to express humility, exercise faith and experience intimacy? How might you advance a culture of belonging?
- **Becoming** like Jesus who you follow. Consider how you might advance a culture of becoming a people who are characterized as compassionate, vulnerable, humble, grateful and giving first to others.
- **Believing** in Jesus as the Spirit makes Him known. Consider how you might support a culture of attentive listening to others' story, vulnerably sharing your story and sensitive witness of Jesus' story.

Then pray together with a partner or small group: *"Dear Jesus, help us to lead as you led by creating a relational legacy through a process of belonging to You, becoming like You and believing in You."*

John 16 ENCOUNTER JESUS

"For in this unbelieving world you will experience trouble and sorrows, but you must be courageous for I have conquered the world!" (John 16:33)

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Hurt is inevitable. It's not a matter of if we're going to be hurt, but rather when we are hurt in this life, what are we going to do about it? Hurt can come from many sources: circumstances (Illness, accidents); family members (parents, siblings, grandparents); friends, teachers, coaches, enemies.

Hurt also takes many forms. Synonyms for hurt or trouble in this world might include:

- I was disappointed that my teammate didn't complete his part of the project.
- I felt rejected when my teenager wouldn't reciprocate affection.
- I was embarrassed when I tripped and fell with many onlookers.
- I felt betrayed when my friend spoke against me.
- I was frustrated when my car wouldn't start.
- felt abandoned when my dad left our family.
- I felt sad on the anniversary of my mother's death.

Consider your pain; it's real; don't minimize it. Your pain is important to Jesus. It's significant that we have a great High Priest who empathizes with us, having suffered as we suffer (Hebrews 4:14-16).

- Rejected in his hometown (Mark 6:2-4).
- Called demon-possessed by the Pharisees (John 10:20).
- Rejected by His family (Mark 3:20-21).
- Insulted by His disciples (Matthew 26:6-9).
- Disappointed by Philip (John 14:6-9).
- Offended in the upper room at the last supper (Luke 22:24).
- Unsupported in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-40).
- Embarrassed on the cross (John 19:23).
- Mocked (Luke 23:36).
- Cursed (Luke 23:39).

Pause and reflect on Jesus' suffering.

He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3). Allow yourself to fellowship with the sufferings of Jesus (see Philippians 3:10). Express your care: *"Lord, because I love you, it makes me sad that you have experienced so much pain."*

John 16

EXPERIENCE SCRIPTURE

"But here's the truth: it's to your advantage that I go away; for if I don't go away, the Divine Encourager will not be released to you. But after I depart, I will send him to you." (John 16:7)

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God wants us to live abundantly "in the present" as His Word brings healing to hurt, anger, guilt, fear and condemnation – which are heart hindrances to life abundant. In John 16, Jesus—encourages His disciples not to surrender to confusion or doubt (John 16:1).

For the benefit of His disciples, He sends the Divine Encourager: "But here's the truth: it's to your advantage that I go away; for if I don't go away, the Divine Encourager will not be released to you. But after I depart, I will send him to you" (John 16:7).

God wants to take us from a place of sadness to joy! Jesus uses a powerful metaphor to reinforce this truth: "Just like a woman giving birth experiences intense labor pains in delivering her baby, yet after the child is born she quickly forgets what she went through because of the overwhelming joy of knowing that a new baby has been born into the world"(John 16;21).

Jesus goes on to encourage His disciples with these words: "So will you also pass through a time of intense sorrow when I am taken from you, but you will see me again! And then your hearts will burst with joy, with no one being able to take it from you!" (John 16:22).

"When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement" (Acts 15:31). Use the words of Scripture to encourage one another.

- Within your group, share a Scripture that has *come alive* in your heart to guide and shape your life: "*I remember how I felt insecure about my relationship with God until He brought reassurance to my heart through 1 John 5:13.*"
- Pray together with a group member, thanking God for the encouragement of His Word: "*Thank you, Lord, for helping me to experience freedom from fear and to have more overwhelming joy in my life.*"

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