



Liking Jesus Leader Guide Session 3: Revealing Authenticity

Video Notes:

We live in a totally and completely selfie-obsessed world.

What we are trying to do is to show the world the “me” that I want them to see.

The more filtered our lives become, the less authentic we are.

One day we wake up and have all sorts of other struggles and don’t know why.

We fear and avoid unfiltered communication.

Many people are afraid to have a conversation in real time because that conversation can’t be edited.

“We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away”

(2 Corinthians 3:13)

What veil are you wearing? In what area of your life are you showing the world some me that you want them to see instead of the me that you really are?

Some people have been honest enough to admit that they try to think of doing things that are social media worthy — they’re living their life to try to create a social media moment.

A veil that covers the face eventually covers the heart.

What started out as a superficial covering became a spiritual condition.

Today, there are many people who simply don’t know how to open up.

We are so used to showing the fake self that we don’t even know who the real self is.

We’re living for Likes while at the same time longing for love.

We don’t understand what brings connection. We may impress people with our strengths, but we connect with people through our weaknesses.

How to respond:

1. *Be yourself. Show yourself.*

Take a social media break. Challenge yourself not to use filters. Be who you actually are.

Christ can remove the veil.

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“But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away”

(2 Corinthians 3:16).

2. Turn to God.

Instead of turning to everyone else for approval or for your identity, turn to God and suddenly, your identity is not in Likes but in his love.

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory”

(2 Corinthians 3:17 – 18).

Group Discussion:

Take time to talk about what you just watched.

1. What part of the teaching had the most impact on you?

You and Your Selfie

2. Craig pointed out that sometimes on social media we show the world a version of ourselves that filters out a larger truth. For example, a gym selfie with a protein shake might convey, “I’m getting in shape,” when the larger truth is you also just ate a bag of chips and a gallon of ice cream. Is there a larger truth that’s filtered out in the selfie you shared? If so, in what ways does it contradict your “I” statement (what the photo conveys)?
3. Whether it’s on social media or in other contexts, we all face the temptation to create snapshot versions of ourselves to impress others or to manage how they see us. And yet the more we rely on these filtered or partial versions of ourselves to generate affirmation and acceptance, the harder it is to be authentic. Author and scholar Brené Brown defines authenticity in part as “cultivating the courage to be emotionally honest, to set boundaries, and to allow ourselves to be vulnerable. . . We let go of what we are supposed to be and embrace who we are.”
 - Based on Brené Brown’s definition, do you think it’s possible to be authentic on social media? Share any examples you can think of to illustrate your response.
 - If the filtered or partial version of who you are is what gets affirmed and accepted, what happens to the rest of who you are? How does this impact your ability to have authentic relationships?

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- If social media trains us to present filtered and partial truths about ourselves, what relationships or contexts would you say train us in authenticity?
4. What insecurities make it hard to be your ordinary self with others (on social media or otherwise)? What “veils” do you tend to use to cover those insecurities?
- Paul uses the veil as a metaphor to describe the spiritual impairment that blinded the Jewish people of his day to the truth about Jesus — he said a veil covered their hearts. Craig elaborated when he said, “A veil that covers the face eventually covers the heart. What started out as a superficial covering became a spiritual condition.” How do you recognize this dynamic in connection with the veils or filters you and others use (on social media or otherwise)? In other words, how might these superficial coverings become spiritual impairments?
 - How would you describe what it means to have an unveiled face? Consider this both in the spiritual context that Paul describes and in a relational context (the way we present ourselves to others).
 - When Paul says that we “contemplate the Lord’s glory,” the Greek word he uses for “contemplate” can be literally translated “beholding as in a mirror.”⁵ It’s a beautiful image. When we choose to gaze at Christ’s glory (rather than our own), we not only increasingly reflect his glory, but we also begin to see the beauty of our unveiled faces reflected back to us — the “ever increasing glory” of the person God created us to be.
 - What do you find challenging or compelling about this image of Christ’s glory as a mirror?
 - In what ways do you sense God may be inviting you to gaze into this mirror — to see yourself illuminated by the light of Christ?
5. Take a few moments to reflect on what you’ve learned and experienced together in this study so far.
- How has learning more about struggles with social media impacted you and your relationship with God?
 - Since the first session, what shifts have you noticed in yourself in terms of how you relate to the group? For example, do you feel more or less guarded, understood, challenged, encouraged, connected, etc.?