

Blue Like Jazz by Donald Miller - Nonreligious thoughts on Christian spirituality

Lesson Objectives

- Continue to deepen trust and relationship with the members of the study.
- Help the members of the study begin to understand that falling in love with Jesus is central to the Christian life.
- Use this study to transition the group to studying full passages of scripture next week!

Lesson Notes

- We are reading the last chapter in Blue Like Jazz this week. It starts out with a story about Bill Bright the guy who started Cru over 50 years ago!
- Before you launch into the study, have snacks available and set aside 15-20 minutes for people to slow down from their day and connect with others. Use this time to personally build relationships and trust with individuals there.

Getting Started

- After 15-20 minutes, let everyone know you are getting started and ask them to grab a seat.
- If you haven't yet, this week ask a member of the group to pray for your time.

Launch

To get us started this week let's consider the following question about relationships:

- Who is your closest friend? What are some of the attributes about them that you appreciate most? [Let them discuss for a while. Eventually close the discussion saying, "In many ways our relationship with Jesus should mirror that of a relationship with a close friend. Let's see what our article has to say about our relationship with Jesus."]

Discussion

Read 233,236-237

- The author says that "[he thinks] the most important thing that happens within Christian Spirituality is when a person falls in love with Jesus." (237)

Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

- The author ends these two sections by saying, "I know that our culture will sometimes understand our love for Jesus as weakness. There is this lie floating around that says I am suppose to be able to do life alone, without any help, without stopping to worship something bigger than myself. But I actually believe there is something bigger than me, and I need for there to be something bigger than me. I need someone to put awe inside me; I need to come second to someone who has everything figured out." (237)

Why do you think he argues that he needs for there to be something bigger than himself?

- Ok so at some level we can agree that it would be great to genuinely love Jesus and to experience something bigger than ourselves. Let's continue reading and see what this might look like in our own lives.

Read the three sections on 238 and 239

- In the first section the author describes what an interaction with Jesus might look like if he and Jesus sat down together by a campfire. What emotions do you think you would feel if Jesus sat down and had a conversation with you about your life? Why?
- The author suggests that Christian Spirituality is like Jazz music in that it is something you feel. What are the attributes about Jesus that you find most attractive; attributes that might cause you to fall more in love with Him?
- Before we read the last section, let's spend a little time talking about how what we have discussed so far applies to our own lives.

Apply

Turn to the person next to you and answer the following questions:

- In what ways do you experience being in love with Jesus? In what ways do you experience not being in love with Jesus?
- What prevents you from falling in love with Jesus?
- What would your life look like if you fell more in love with Jesus?

Closing

To finish out today's reading we are going to read both the last section of Blue Like Jazz and a portion of the last section of the book of John. As you read both sections you will notice a number of similarities in the two passages; be looking for what those similarities are.

Read 239-240 and John 20:30,31

- What similarities do you see between what John is getting at here in a few words and what Don has been trying to get at in Blue Like Jazz? [They could word it different ways but they should be getting at the ideas that both authors had an experience of Jesus, both want others to know and trust Him, and they both want others to experience the life that Jesus offers.]
- So the Apostle John is like the author in that Jesus' intersected and radically changed their lives. Both men want you to trust Jesus and experience a love relationship with Him.
- Over the past few weeks we have found it helpful to read in Blue Like Jazz one man's experience with Jesus. In the Gospel of John we have an opportunity to learn from another man's experience with Jesus. In many ways John's record of his experience will actually be more helpful. John was afforded the opportunity to experience Jesus *in the flesh on a daily basis for three years!* He must have lots of great insight into Jesus. So to continue our discussions next week, we are going to take a look at what John has recorded for us in his Gospel about Jesus.
- To wrap up our time let's finish by praying about everything we discussed today and about our time in John next week.

Pray

Again get with your partner and take turns praying these things for yourself and your partner:

- Pray that Jesus would be more real to us.
- Pray that we would fall more in love with Jesus.
- Pray that as we read John in the coming weeks, Jesus would reveal more of himself to us and that we would grow to trust Him more.