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## Surprise the World! Chapter 6: Learn

I will spend at least one period of the week learning Christ.

### Scripture

<sup>7</sup> Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, <sup>8</sup> others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. <sup>9</sup> But Herod said, "I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?" And he tried to see him.  
—Luke 9:7-9, NIV

<sup>27</sup> But we know where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from."

<sup>28</sup> Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own authority, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, <sup>29</sup> but I know him because I am from him and he sent me."  
—John 7:27-29, NIV

### Chapter Summary

The earliest Christians learned Jesus after conversion by becoming catechumens (converts studying the faith, renouncing sin, and putting on Christ's character in preparation for baptism). Frost believes that learning Jesus today has two benefits:

1. The value of greater intimacy with God.
2. The value of being able to share who we know with others.

"[I]f we're being sent into the world to live intriguing lives, arouse curiosity, and answer people's inquiries about the hope we have within, we need more than ever to know what Jesus would do or say in any circumstance. And we can't know that without a deep and ongoing study of the biographies of Jesus written by those who knew him best—the Gospels."  
—Page 72

If we are to become "little Christs," as C.S. Lewis once said, we will learn what parts of Jesus' life we can emulate. This goes beyond asking, "What would Jesus do?" or "What would Jesus say?" The better question is, "How would Jesus live my life, if he were living it?" This forces us to gain a better grasp of the Gospels, moves us beyond knowing only the "greatest hits," and into an immersive knowing of Jesus.

Frost speaks of the phrase "incarnational mission." This term combines ideas of being sent out (mission) in a way modeled on how Jesus came, dwelling among us (incarnational). Incarnational mission means we pattern our lives on the example of Jesus by going out to others and seriously, deeply, choosing to be *with* them. But how will we be with others if we aren't first with Jesus?

Thus, learning Jesus means studying the Gospels, but doing so while still reading the rest of the Bible (not privileging the Gospels).

"While the story of Jesus is indeed the key to history, to emphasize the Gospels over the rest of the New Testament is to forget that Jesus is Lord over *all* of history. Jesus is Head of the church that succeeds him in earthly ministry, and Jesus is in fact the Author of the *whole* New Testament via the inspiration of the Holy Spirit—as he is, indeed, the God who inspired the whole Bible."  
—John Stackhouse, quoted on Page 77

Thus, don't abandon your other habits of Bible reading, but supplement it in three possible ways.

1. Read and reread the four Gospels. This can take many forms. One way is to read each one through in one sitting (Mark takes 1.5 hours, John 2 hours, Matthew and Luke 2.5 hours). This helps connect the broad themes together within each gospel.
2. Read about Jesus in books written by others. Frost lists several options (see also the appendix):
  - Jesus and the Gospels by Craig Blomberg
  - The Challenge of Jesus by N.T. Wright
  - Jesus According to Scripture by Darrell Bock
  - Jesus the King by Timothy Keller
3. Watch film adaptations of Jesus' life.

Finally, think of the goal of this habit like being able to introduce your friend to someone else. Surfers could list Kelly Slater as one of their favorite surfers and with great excitement could name facts about his life, what surfboard he uses, his awards, movie appearances, and more. How would we respond to, "Tell me what you know about Jesus"? What kind of enthusiasm or emotion might we show?

## Questions

Use whichever questions you like. Some are taken from the book; other questions can be found starting on page 109.

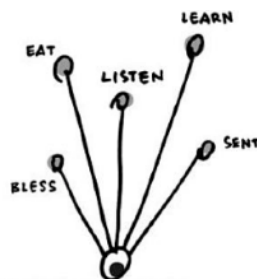
1. The two passages of Scripture are examples of people who encountered Jesus and yet did not know him. How did Herod and the people of Jerusalem miss out on knowing Jesus? What is it that was true about Him that they were blind to? You may want to read some of the surrounding verses to gain better understanding.
2. What is the difference between studying Scripture and learning Jesus? In what ways do we need both?
3. What do you find surprising, questionable, or intriguing about Jesus? If this question is hard for you to answer, why do you think that might be?
4. What role does curiosity and imagination play in the way we move from reading the Gospels to answering the question, "How would Jesus live my life, if he were living it?"
5. What books or movies have given you insight into Jesus? What would you recommend to others?
6. Imagine you are given the assignment to introduce Jesus as a guest speaker at a gathering. After you get over your fear of public speaking and regain consciousness, what would you say? Spend a few minutes jotting down some notes and share them with your group.

## Prayer

Search for the song "I Want to Know You" by CityAlight on Spotify or YouTube and play it (5 ½ minutes). If your group is comfortable, you can print out the lyrics (see below) and sing this aloud as your prayer. If you'd rather not sing, you can use the lyrics as a prompt for prayer.

## Challenge

Spend at least one period of the week learning Jesus.



## **I Want to Know You**

Michael Farren, Jonny Robinson, Rich Thompson, James Proctor  
As sung by CityAlight

### *Verse 1*

I've tried in vain a thousand ways  
My fears to quell, my hopes to raise  
But what I need, Your word has said  
Is ever, only, Jesus

### *Verse 2*

You died, you live, you reign, you plead  
There's love in all your words and deeds  
This weary heart finds all it needs  
In ever, only, Jesus

### *Chorus*

I want to know you, Jesus my Lord  
King of the Heavens, King of my soul  
I trade my treasure and all my rewards  
Jesus to know you, then know you more

### *Verse 3*

Though some should curse me for your name  
I have no fear, I have no shame  
You stand with me for all my days  
My ever, only, Jesus

### *Bridge*

Like wave after wave on the ocean  
Like all of the sand on the shore  
Your beauty and glory are endless  
O Jesus I must know you more