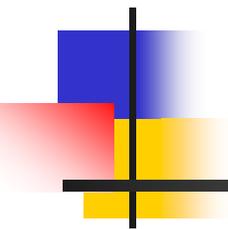


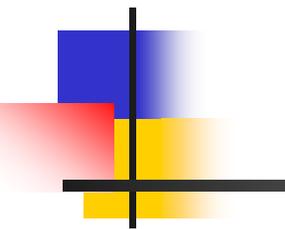
Living Like Jesus



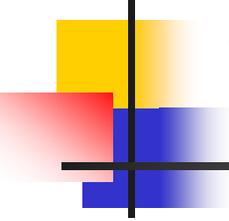
**“It is enough for a disciple to
be like his Master...”**

- Matt 10:25

To Be Like Jesus...



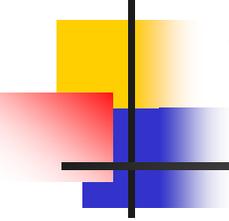
Jesus' statement in Matt. 10:25 implies that His disciples will be like Him. To His first-century followers, that included the prospect of persecution and martyrdom. But what else does it mean to "be like Jesus," especially for Christians in today's marketplace? Eight portraits in Matthew's eyewitness account give us some clues.



What It Means to Be Like Jesus

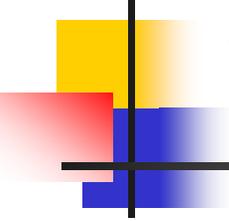
- 1] To be like Jesus means to accept our roots (1:1–17).
- 2] To be like Jesus means to engage the world's pain and struggle (1:18–2:23).

- Thomas Nelson, Inc., Word in Life Study Bible [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1996.



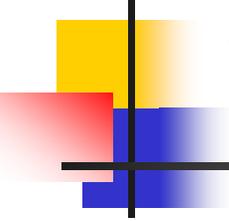
What It Means to Be Like Jesus

- 3] To be like Jesus means to commit ourselves to other believers, no matter how “weird” they appear to be (3:1–17).
- 4] To be like Jesus means to admit our vulnerability to temptation (4:1–11).



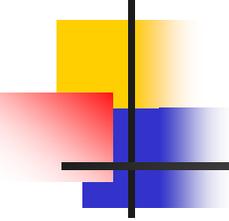
What It Means to Be Like Jesus

- 5] To be like Jesus means to openly proclaim the message of Christ (4:12–25).
- 6] To be like Jesus means to commit ourselves to changed thinking and behavior (5:1–7:27).



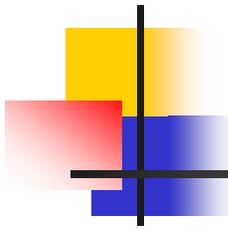
What It Means to Be Like Jesus

- 7] To be like Jesus means to serve others, especially those who are oppressed or without Christ (8:1–9:38).
- 8] To be like Jesus means to affirm others in leadership (10:1–42).



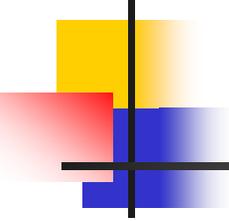
To Accept Our Roots [1:1-17]

Jesus' family tree hides nothing. His heritage was multiethnic and included several unattractive or embarrassing individuals. Indeed, the circumstances surrounding His own birth might have raised questions in the minds of some. But Jesus never denied His ancestry or allowed others to shame Him. If we want to be like Him, we need to understand and accept our roots in terms of culture, race, gender, and reputation. Moreover, like Jesus we want to avoid demeaning anyone else's heritage.



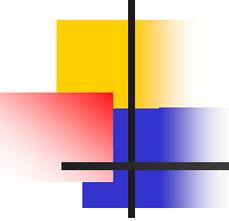
To Engage the World's Pain [1:18–2:23]

Jesus' entry into human life was fraught with awkward tensions and human dilemmas: a miraculous but nevertheless embarrassing conception, an earthly father who was considering a quiet divorce, an outraged king resorting to infanticide, an early childhood in a strange culture, and a return to a homeland that remained hostile and dangerous. We, too, are all born into some troubles and circumstances. If we want to be like Jesus, we need to face up to the world and remain very much in it, despite all its troubles.



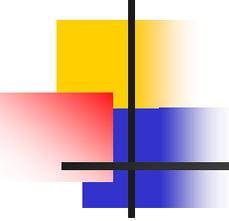
To Commit Ourselves to Other Believers – [3:1-17]

John the Baptist was not your average individual. He was an unexpected child. He lived in the wilderness—the “other side of the tracks” for that day. He wore strange clothing and ate strange food. He was pugnacious, even offensive at times. Yet he helped launch Jesus’ career. In return, Jesus had nothing but praise for him (11:7–15). If we want to be like Jesus, we must not pick and choose our brothers and sisters in God’s family. We need to embrace other believers and demonstrate our unity in Christ, no matter how awkward or inconvenient.



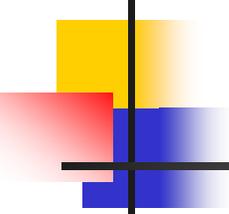
To Admit Our Vulnerability to Temptation [4:1-11]

Matthew's inclusion of the temptation is remarkable. It shows that the sinless Lord of the universe was tempted, just as we are (Heb. 4:15–16). If we want to be like Jesus, we must accept that temptation is real—as is the possibility of overcoming temptation. But we need to be open about our struggles. In doing so we honor God, recognize the power of sin, and encourage others to do likewise.



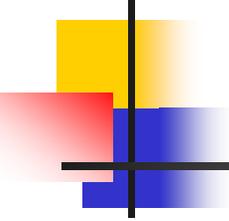
To Proclaim the Message of Christ [4:12-25]

Jesus' life was not an open book, readable by all. To be sure, He lived a perfect, model life. But even that could not stand alone as an undeniable witness. His actions needed interpretation. So He supplemented His good deeds with good news. In the same way, we need to verbally declare our faith if we want to be like Christ. Certainly we need to back up our words with a Christlike lifestyle. But what we tell others gives meaning to our quiet walk and good deeds.



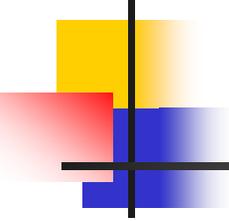
To Commit TO Changed Thinking & Behavior [5:1–7:27]

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus explained the values of the kingdom. Money, prayer, relationships, possessions, information, and power were a few of the categories He redefined from God's perspective. He showed that following Him will involve radical change for most of us. It may mean undoing the way we've always done things and rethinking traditional sources of wisdom from our parents and culture. To become like Jesus involves a tough-minded review of our values and a thorough change in our behavior.



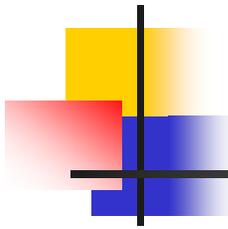
To Serve Others [8:1–9:38]

- The Sermon on the Mount was immediately followed by “deeds in the valley.” Christ-like values lead to servant actions—and it was obedient action that Jesus cared about, not just sermonizing (7:21–29). Jesus modeled how to do the will of God by actively serving more than 25 different people (chs. 8–9).



To Serve Others [8:1–9:38]

- These included such undesirables as lepers, an officer of the Roman occupation troops, the sick, the demon-possessed, cave dwellers, tax collectors, and a diseased, outcast woman. If we want to be like Jesus, we need to befriend those who are weak, under oppression, or without Christ. Like Him, we need to become “a friend of sinners” (11:19). He offered much more than religious information—He served them.



To Affirm Other Leaders

[10:1-42]

Jesus invested Himself in the development of other people, particularly the Twelve. He gave them responsibility and authority, resisting the temptation to get the job done “right” by doing it Himself. In doing so, He accepted the risk that they might fail. Of course, He gave them adequate preparation before sending them out, and on their return He affirmed them on their successful completion of the mission. Jesus calls us to help others grow. If we want to be like Him, we will share the joys and risks of working together with our brothers and sisters.