

## Building Better Relationships: Learning to Love Like Jesus

This series is about building better relationships by learning to love like Jesus. At the end of our lives, we come to the reality that life is not about accomplishments, but relationships. We were created to be connected. So what can we learn about building relationships from Jesus, who bore the very nature of divine love ...embodied in human vulnerability... in this wounded world.? This series has explored the following five patterns in the life of Jesus.

### 1. Becoming Loved to Love: Learning to Embrace the “Me” that is Essential to “We”

*Jesus said...“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.” - John 15:9*

*We bring our genuine presence... before the presence of God ... to allow God’s love to reclaim us from the false identities of this world.... recenter us from mere whims and wishes around us...and fill us with the source of affirmation that can be shared with others.*

A simple Prayer of Connection:

*God, I belong to you.*

*May your will become my will.*

*May your love become my love.*

### 2. Becoming Connected: Learning to Form Circles of Common Ground

1. Embrace dependency.
2. Bless the best in others.
3. Don’t look for the “successful,” but rather the personally responsive.
4. Maintain alignment with Your God-given purpose and calling.
5. Be intentional about your commitments of time.
6. Care enough to contend.
7. Expect disappointment ..as part of the process.

### 3. Becoming Safe: Learning to See Others Beneath the Surface

*Jesus said ... “Stop judging by mere appearances...” - John 7:21, 24*

1. Slow down... and maintain a margin for grace.
2. See beneath the outward behavior... to the soul that bears God’s image.
3. Exercise the power of initiating.
4. Embody the reality of grace with our presence.

### 4. Becoming a Contender: Learning to Contend for What is True and Good

*“Speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ...” Eph. 4:15 (NLT)*

Contending Well involves...

1. A foundation of caring.
2. A willingness to risk (discomfort, resentment, rejection).
3. A freedom from presuming control.
4. A position of humility (that is honest with our own challenges).

### 5. Becoming a Servant: Learning to Give Ourselves for the Sake of Others

*“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.” - I John 3:16*

- Love gives by choice.
- Love gives with purpose.
- Love gives from eternal love.

*Jesus said: “If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.” - Matthew 10:39 (NLT)*