

# NIV Online-Friendly Involvement Learning

## Lesson 5 | July 5, 2020

### Into the Lesson

Have the following displayed as a screen-share for learners to discuss as they log in:

*What non-politician is the media currently reporting as creating controversy?*

Keep track of responses. Then select one and ask, “Why does this person create such different reactions among various groups?” Keep the discussion short.

Make a transition by saying, “Controversial figures have emerged throughout history. Today we’ll explore differing opinions about the person and ministry of John the Baptist.”

*Option.* Before your virtual class starts, email to each learner a copy of the “Puzzling” exercise from the activity page, which you can download [here](#). Conduct an agree/disagree discussion as appropriate. (Note: Since there is usually more than one exercise on an activity page, you should take care to distribute—by email or text message—only the exercise that is relevant at the time; otherwise, distraction may result.)

### Into the Word

Email or text handouts (you prepare) that feature two blank columns and two blank rows. Have the left column headed *John the Baptist* and the right column headed *Jesus*. Title the first row *How they differed in lifestyle*. Title the second row *The logic people used to reject them*. Encourage learners to use their handouts as note takers as they work through the text. Have a volunteer read Matthew 11:1-5 as a lead-in to the lesson text. Use the Lesson Context to ensure that students grasp the circumstances.

Invite a student to read Matthew 11:7, 8. Ask learners to define the term *rhetorical question*. (This is a question that is asked without expectation of receiving an answer.)

Then have learners engage in a *What’s So/So What?* exercise. (*Option.* Teachers of larger classes may wish to issue invitation links in advance for smaller breakout groups for this discussion.) For the *What’s So* part, learners are to decide whether Jesus’ questions were or were not rhetorical in nature. For the *So What?* part, learners are to decide what difference it makes whether the questions were rhetorical in nature. (Create an appropriate screen-share and/or electronic handout of these instructions if you think your class needs to have them visibly.)

After discussion of results, read Matthew 11:9-14 aloud. Then announce a speed drill as you perform a screen-share of the following question: “What are the facts about John the Baptist as recorded in Scripture passages other than this one?” Mute all participants (except yourself) as you announce a one-minute time limit for making lists individually. Announce scoring of one point per fact and one point per Scripture reference that establishes that fact. After calling time, poll the participants to determine the winner. Check results against your own research done during your preparation to teach the lesson.

At an appropriate point, perform a screen-share of a bridge with the words of Matthew 11:15 written beneath it. Ask how that verse can be seen as a bridge that connects the verses prior to it with those that follow. Allow up to a minute of dead silence (mute all participants) to allow time to think. If there are no responses after that minute, offer a hint, remuting as appropriate afterward. Then discuss Jesus’ comparisons in verses 16-19 and how they are connected to His descriptions in verses 7-14.

*Option.* As a post-test, email or text a copy of the “Correcting Falsehood” quiz from the activity page.

Allow learners to score their own results after one minute (mute all during this time).

### Into Life

Email or text handouts (you create) which feature these words and phrases:

*saving money / choosing friends / spending money / monetary giving / priorities in time expenditures / parenting / marriage / diet / exercise / [other]*

Have learners pick the one area in which they most lack godly wisdom and think of a “what’s next” action to begin an improvement plan. Allow sharing from those who desire to do so.

# NIV Online-Friendly Involvement Learning

## Lesson 6 | July 12, 2020

### Into the Lesson

Ask the class about a time they were accidentally left behind as a child or accidentally left behind a child or grandchild. Be prepared to give an example of your own if learners are slow to respond. After a few have shared, talk first about how it felt to be left behind. Then discuss how it felt to leave a child behind accidentally. What similarities are there in the two experiences?

Make a transition by saying, “Our experiences as both child and adult in this regard have one thing in common: fear. How Jesus reacted to being left behind in the temple was not one of fear, however. Today’s lesson explores why Jesus responded the way he did to this event.”

### Into the Word

Ask for definitions of the words *identity*, *calling*, and *mission*. Follow by asking how the concepts relate to one another. Keep track of answers, then work through the list to accept and reject entries in moving toward consensus. Then create three groups and designate them according to those three concepts; send or make arrangements to have sent separate group-invitation links. Include e-handouts (you create) with the following information:

**Jesus’ Identity Group:** Read Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52; and others of your own choosing. 1—How does Jesus’ perception of God’s will inform his true identity? 2—In what ways do his physical growth and favorable perception with God serve as a key to his identity?

**Jesus’ Calling Group:** Read Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52; and others of your own choosing. 1—What were the roles of Mary and Joseph in helping Jesus fulfill his calling? 2—How did Jesus’ intimate connection with his heavenly Father indicate his sense of calling? 3—How did Jesus’ priority of being in God’s house reveal something about his calling?

**Jesus’ Mission Group:** Read Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52; and other passages of your own choosing. 1—How did Jesus understand the priority of his mission? 2—How was Jesus’ thirst to understand spiritual questions an indication of his sense of his mission? 3—What did Mary and Joseph already understand about Jesus, and what do they still need to learn?

After a strict time limit for group processing, reconvene for whole-class discussion. Ask the class what overlaps exist among Jesus’ identity, calling, and mission. Explore how these overlaps are similar to and different from the class members’ own senses of their identity, calling, and mission. Allow time for discussion.

*Alternative.* Distribute copies of the “Cycles of Wisdom” exercise from the activity page, which you can download [here](#). (Note: Since there is usually more than one exercise on an activity page, you should take care to distribute—by email or text message—only the exercise that is relevant at the time; otherwise, distraction may result.) Form groups of three or four to complete as indicated. Reconvene for whole-class compare-and-contrast of results. Email or text copies of the “Amazement” exercise from the activity page for whole-class discussion.

### Into Life

Email or text the following prayer schedule. Challenge learners to use it in the week ahead.

**Sunday:** Focus on thanking God for your identity as his child whom he leads in wisdom.

**Monday and Tuesday:** Focus on thanking God for calling you to be part of his family and for wisdom you need to do the work he has given you to do in his kingdom.

**Wednesday and Thursday:** Focus on thanking God for his mission of love in the world and for wisdom to recognize him at work.

**Friday and Saturday:** Focus on wisdom to live in a right relationship with God, others, and the world.

Close by having learners write a prayer of commitment to choose godly wisdom over secular wisdom at all times.

# NIV Online-Friendly Involvement Learning

## Lesson 7 | July 19, 2020

### Into the Lesson

Before class, do an internet search for someone who could be described as a hometown hero. Share the information you find with the class and ask for examples they have from their own hometowns. Discuss what is required for someone to be designated that way.

Ask how stereotypes about the neighborhood or place where the hometown hero grew up shape his or her reputation one way or the other with regard to “hero” status. For example, if the area is rural, would people from urban areas acknowledge that what the person did merits “hero” status? Ask how such preconceptions add to or detract from a given person’s story of achievement.

*Alternative.* Email or text copies of the “Wisdom Sayings” exercise from the activity page, which you can download [here](#). (Note: Since there is usually more than one exercise on an activity page, you should take care to send only the exercise that is relevant at the time; otherwise, distraction may result.) Have learners work silently for no more than one minute to complete as indicated; mute all participants during this time.

Lead into Bible study by saying, “We often limit our expectations of others based on where they come from. It was no different in Jesus’ day. Let’s see how he handled it.”

### Into the Word

Divide the class into thirds; send each participant an invitation link to one of the three groups. (Since this can be time-consuming, do as much advance planning as possible regarding best procedure.) Give each group one of these three designations: *Neighbors’ Perspective* / *Family’s Perspective* / *Disciples’ Perspective*. Send with invitation links this assignment as an email attachment, as a text message, or to accompany the link itself (the assignment is identical for all groups):

Read Mark 6:1-6 from the point of view of your group name. Then fill in the blanks for these statements:

- 1—Before Jesus came back to town, I thought I knew \_\_\_\_\_ about him, but I didn’t.
- 2—While Jesus was speaking, I was surprised to hear him say or watch him \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3—After Jesus finished speaking, my opinion had changed in the following way: \_\_\_\_\_.

Inform participants that they are allowed to use their “sanctified imaginations” in making reasonable entries based on what is consistent with the text of Mark 6:1-6. After groups finish within a strict time limit, reconvene for a whole-class discussion; allow groups to summarize their perspectives. When all three have done so, ask participants to compare and contrast the perspectives. Point out similarities and differences in the opinions and reactions among Jesus’ neighbors, His family, and His disciples. Keep track of responses as they are voiced; share your screen as you do. Then read Mark 3:21-35 aloud and ask if that text causes any responses to be modified.

### Into Life

Connect Into the Word with Into Life by asking learners how responses in the former suggest overlaps with the experiences of Christians today. This question may result in dead silence and confused looks, but don’t relieve any resulting silence for at least 15 seconds. If no response is forthcoming after that amount of

time, ask, “What does any overlap suggest about potential pitfalls of knowing Jesus for a long time?” (*One possible response:* In a mild version of the old saying “Familiarity breeds contempt,” a person who has been a Christian for many years may assume that he or she knows everything there is to know about Jesus. That in turn may result in an overly casual approach to Him.)

Brainstorm ways to avoid mentioned pitfalls. Jot ideas with a method suitable for screen-sharing. Allow critiques only after brainstorming concludes. Go over the ideas one by one, asking learners to cite Scripture support for each. After all ideas are critiqued, call for one minute of silence for learners to identify (privately in their thoughts) one besetting tendency to replace godly wisdom with secular wisdom.

*Option.* Email or text copies of the “Follow Godly Wisdom” exercise from the activity page as an at-home exercise. Encourage completion by promising to discuss results next week.

# NIV Online-Friendly Involvement Learning

## Lesson 8 | July 26, 2020

### Into the Lesson

Ask the class to name social networking outlets. Record responses in screen-sharing mode as they are mentioned. (*Responses* can include, but are not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and Tumblr.) Tally by shows of hands the outlets your learners make postings to or otherwise maintain profiles in.

Contrast your learners' ordinary uses of social media to that of someone who seeks to become a social-media influencer—one of which you have researched in advance as an example. (To avoid politicizing the discussion, do not pick a politician as your example.)

Ask learners how that person's use of social media differs from their own use. If no one mentions it, state that would-be influencers attempt to build a following by leading others to click on social media's various *Like*, *Follow*, *Subscribe*, and *Share* buttons.

*Alternative.* Send participants copies of the "Building a Following" exercise from the activity page, which you can download [here](#). (Note: Since there is usually more than one exercise on an activity page, you should take care to send only the exercise that is relevant at the time; otherwise, distraction may result.) Have learners work individually for no more than one minute to complete as indicated; mute all participants during this time.

After either activity, say, "We live in a world where we constantly encounter someone saying, 'trust me.' Today's lesson will consider Jesus' invitation to do just that."

### Into the Word

Ask a volunteer to read only John 14:1-4 of the lesson text. Then ask, "What difference does it make that Jesus was speaking privately to His disciples and not at this time to large crowds—the social media of his day?"

If learners are slow to respond, do not break the silence for at least 15 seconds. Puzzled looks indicate thinking; allow learners the time to process the question. Jot responses for screen-sharing. Keep your own responses to a minimum until you revisit this activity in Into Life.

Next, form multiples of these two groups, sending invitation links as appropriate: **Thomas Group** to consider John 14:5-7 and **Philip Group** to consider John 14:8-11. Challenge groups to make an "about me" online profile for their apostle. Encourage use of online Bible dictionaries.

After a strict time limit, reconvene to invite groups to share their profiles. After they do so, draw a 10-point linear scale and display it on screen-sharing. Label the left end *1–Unimportant* and the right end *10–Vitaly Important*. Then pose this question to each group in turn while other groups listen: How important is today's text in establishing your namesake's profile relative to all the other texts about him? Enter results on the scale; probe for disagreements.

Discuss John 14:12-14 as a class. Launch the discussion by asking, "In what ways do these verses respond to the questions Philip and Thomas had for Jesus?" (Expect varied responses.) When learners attempt to come to grips with John 14:12, focus class's attention on that verse. Use the commentary to clear up misconceptions. Invite examples of what the "greater works" might be.

*Option.* Send by email attachment or text message copies of the "Contrast Jesus' Statement" exercise from the activity page. If your class meets as a hybrid—part in-person and part virtually, have learners complete the activity as those two groups separately.

## Into Life

Reopen the discussion of John 14:1-4 by posing this scenario: “Suppose that tomorrow you had a private heartfelt discussion in the morning with someone regarding John 14:1-4. Then that afternoon you copy-and-pasted the text of those four verses onto a social media update stream. Which witness is likely to yield better results?”

*Option.* Create visual appeal of the discussion by displaying in scree-share mode two columns headed *Advantages* and *Disadvantages* that are intersected by two rows labeled *Private* and *Social Media*. Type responses within the resulting grid.