

## Jesus Heart Course

**Objective:** The Jesus Heart Course is for students who want to know more about Jesus, the one Christians pledge their lives to following. *Who is Jesus? What did he teach? Why is his resurrection so important? What does it mean to be baptized?* Becoming a disciple of Jesus—a die-hard follower—means that we investigate all that we can about him, his teaching, his miracles...everything! This course will help you begin your investigation and hopefully help you put your faith in him like so many countless others have done before you. Hopefully, by the end of the class students will have a journal of their own thoughts about Jesus and what they have come to believe about him.

**Goals for the course:** Students will come to understand the claims made about Jesus by people in the Bible, and also personal claims he made about himself, all of which will hopefully be helpful in properly framing an original picture of Jesus. Also, through careful study of some of Jesus' parables, miracles and other profound events, students will learn what Jesus expects and doesn't expect from his devoted followers. Students will be expected to keep a personal journal while they take this course as they learn about Jesus, with the hope that what they learn in class and through personal study will enter through the eyes, transport through the mind, heart and soul, and exit through the hand, telling tales of inward transformation and deeper love.

### **Teaching Bibliography for the course:**

- The Gospels: **Matthew** (Mark, Luke and John)
- C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
- Max Lucado, *Just Like Jesus*
- Max Lucado, *Next Door Savior*
- N. T. Wright, *Following Jesus*
- Philip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew*
- William J. Bennett, *The Book of Virtues*

### **Course Schedule and Class Descriptions**

1. **Sonship.** During this class we will explore various *titles* given to Jesus, certainly including the one God gave him: "My Son" found in Matthew 3. We will discuss the sonship of God that we are fortunate to realize as well. N. T. Wright has some important things to share regarding this as well as Paul.

2. **Temptation.** This class will discuss the *temptations* of Jesus found in Matthew 4. We will also discuss temptation we face and the promises of Jesus to help us through those. We will also take a look at what James and Paul say regarding temptation, and hear a compelling story about resisting temptation.
3. **The Sermon on the Mount.** This class will explore how Jesus challenges his followers to think and live differently, to live with the heart and mind of God. We will discuss an reading from one of Max Lucado's books and listen to a little Billy Joel too.
4. **Authority of Jesus.** During this lesson we will discover the great authority Jesus had (and still has today) over all things. He was able to heal the sick, calm a storm and call demons out of people. Amazing! And with authority comes responsibility, and who knew that more than Jesus. King Alfred learned this, and thanks to William Bennett, we will too.
5. **Transformation.** This lesson will look at the call to repentance and change. Jesus desires all of us to face our personal battles of doubt and sin, and turn to him. The great invitation of Jesus is calling you to peace and rest. Matthew will tell his story as well as a paralytic.
6. **Responding to Jesus.** This class will look at how we are to receive the message of the kingdom of God that Jesus was proclaiming. One eager to find the good life will look for it intensely and then grab hold of it firmly.
7. **Confessing Jesus as Lord.** This class will look at the importance of answering the question, "Who is Jesus?" Will you commit to believing he is the Son of God or not? Peter confessed Jesus as God's son, and Jesus certainly claimed to be just that. C. S. Lewis has some important things to say regarding this topic.
8. **Resurrection.** This class will look at the Passion Week events (timeline), and then focus on the resurrection of Jesus and the events that followed. There is much connection with Jesus' resurrection and baptism. Certainly committing to Jesus through baptism is something to ruthlessly ponder.