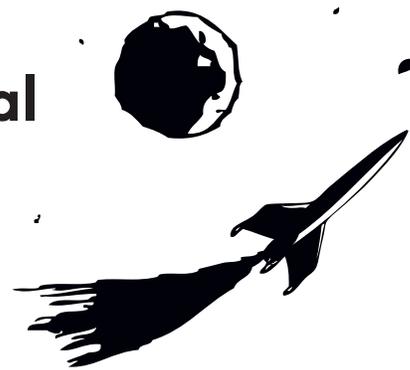


Winter Jam Small Group Material



[Week 1]

FOLLOW-THROUGH JAM

Dive:

No one grows out of growing in Grace! Perhaps it's been years since you first tasted forgiveness or you've recently repented of your sin and placed your faith in Jesus for your salvation. New babe in Christ or seasoned Saint, we all experience something called "follow-up." Follow-up is a practice that church leaders and ministers want to make sure happens in the life of someone who believes the claims of Christ in their heart. Even if you've connected with Jesus years ago, this is something you never grow out of. It was a mandate from Jesus, given to us in **Matthew 28:19-20**. He said,

**"GO, THEREFORE,
AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS,
BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,
AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,
TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS THAT
I HAVE COMMANDED YOU."**

Follow-up is a moment when we want to ensure that you leverage all that God has promised to you in His Word so that you maximize your new life in Christ and become a fully-devoted follower of Jesus.

In **John 10:10**, Jesus said the devil is out to steal, kill, and destroy you. You need to be aware that the moment you get saved, he unleashes an all-out assault against you. He wants to steal the faith you have in your heart. The Word of God is our Source of faith, and satan wants to snatch it out of our hearts. Jesus spoke about the devil's tactics in a parable about a farmer sowing seeds and how the birds of the air came and stole them out of the soil. In **Luke 8:11-12**, Jesus said, "The seed is the word of God....the devil comes and takes away the word out

of their hearts, lest they should believe." Being aware that this attack happens, it's important that you are ministered to, or that someone follows-up with you. Spiritual leaders want to "shoo" the devil off like a crow from a garden, and to nurture the seed that's in the soil of your heart. That process is called, "follow-up." You can see why this is so important to your spiritual growth.

This Four Week Series is Winter Jam's way of following-up with you. We care for you and want to help you. Throughout the rest of this series you will take a journey that will give you more than enough practical steps to arm yourself against the devil's attacks and to nurture your spiritual growth. To start this expedition, I want to share one of the most important words I can give you as you begin your journey of trusting Jesus. If you miss this instruction, it will cause you great distress and spiritual setbacks. Pay close attention to what I am about to say. --Are you listening?-- Okay, here it is. As much as the Bible emphasizes follow-up, it also has an emphasis on follow-through. This one core principle is a serious game-changer for living the Christian life.

Let me repeat myself, "As much as there is an emphasis on follow-up in the Bible, there is also an emphasis on follow-through." I told you what follow-up was; now let's look at follow-through.

In **Mark 8:34**, Jesus said, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." He also said, in **Luke 9:62**, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Do you feel the sense of personal involvement being stressed in these words of Christ? You see, follow-up is about the Church's helping you and follow-through is about you helping yourself. Yes, the Church will be there for you; but it won't, and can't, live-out this life for you. You prayed and, with your lips, you made a confession that Jesus is your Lord. Now you must follow-through with your life. This is essential to embrace if you are to experience the abundant life Christ has for you. Now, let's start the Journey.

In **Luke 7:28**, Jesus said that his cousin, John the Baptist, was the greatest prophet ever born! One of the characteristics that made John stand highest among men, was the way he stood humbly before God. He epitomized that quality, when he said in **John 3:30**,

"HE MUST INCREASE, BUT I MUST DECREASE."

John got one glimpse of Jesus, and his heart was ablaze for His purposes! This raging fire of adoration caused him to put aside his own interests, wants, goals, desires, dreams, and self-absorbed affections for whatever Jesus wanted for his life! His mantra became "Jesus

above Me!" This is the anthem of all who truly see and come to Jesus!

Those three, powerful words,--"Jesus above Me"-- sum-up the DNA of Winter Jam. The lights, artists, songs, and ministry are all for the undaunted purpose of showcasing Jesus! He is the One you saw in the spotlight at center stage! He was the Ultimate Headliner, the night you came or saw the movie! Over the years, hundreds of thousands have gathered at Winter Jam and received a fresh, anointed vision of Jesus! You saw Him, and you gave Him your life!

Rising out of these gatherings, is a ferocious force of faith, known as the JAM PEOPLE. Pledging allegiance to the only Sovereign Lord, "Jesus above Me" is the battle-cry of this thriving community of avid believers that you are now a part of. They're unleashing their God-given purposes and potentials in their local churches, with the audacious ambition to demystify the hope-giving power of the Gospel to a hurting world. Yes, that's right--Jesus saved you, so you can help save others. You do this through serving God in the local church. God will give you the power to pull-it-off, through a heart that cries "Jesus above Me!"

For the next three weeks, we are going to break that three-word mantra down and build your faith up! An empty tomb in Jerusalem tells us that amazing things await you as you seek to live for the One who died for you!

Group discussion directed by the following questions:

Delve:

1. Take a moment and think about the term "follow-up." Now, describe it in your own words.
2. Why do you think "follow-through" is as important as "follow-up?"
3. If "Jesus above Me" were a movie, what part will you play?





[Week 2]

JESUS!

Dive:

"JESUS above me."

It all starts with JESUS. That's who John the Baptist had his eyes fixed on, when he said, "He must increase, and I must decrease." Jesus was the focus of his adoration and affection. Gazing at Christ Jesus provides the motivation to live the "Jesus above Me" life.

As you begin reading your Bible (check-out the "Spiritual Ketchup" lesson on the Winter Jam App), you will find multitudes of stories and statements about Jesus. Three of the most motivational are found in Hebrews, chapter one. The writer says Jesus was the Creator of all things, the Sustainer of all things, and the Healer of our deepest pains! These three statements will be our subjects for the next three weeks. Let's hit that first one now.

At the end of verse two of **Hebrews 1**, the writer says about Jesus: "Through Whom also He made the worlds." This means Jesus was the Agent of creation. Let's rewind a moment, shall we? **Genesis 1:1** says, "In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth." "God created," in the Hebrew language, is "Elohim ba-rah!" Which means God created without the use of any pre-existing material. That's why He's worthy of center-stage. He's the Only One who ever can or ever will tell nothing to do something and it does it! That's hard for our minds to wrap around.

Speaking about your brain, He made it out of dirt yet it's capable of some astonishing abilities! This three-pound mass of cells can store over 100 trillion gigabytes of information. There are 32 gigs in an iPad. That means your brain is equivalent to 4 trillion iPads! It can make fifteen thousand decisions per second, as in the case of the digestive process, following eating. We can taste one part of quinine in a million parts of water. We can smell over one million different odors; and our sense of touch can detect a projection that is only one/twenty-five thousandths of an inch high; DUST! The Bible says in **Proverbs 20:12**, "The seeing eye and hearing ear, God made them both!" He is the Creator of all things!

I've had people hear me speak like this, and they get nervous. They exclaim, "You're controversial! Stop being controversial." No, I'm not controversial. I'm biblical! God said it, that settles it. However, it is seen as controversial. So, why do I go there? Why take the heat? Why take the criticism? Why does it matter so much? Because, if God can create all this from scratch...I want you to imagine, just for a moment, what He can do with your life!

Ephesians 2:10 says we are a workmanship. That means “work of art”. Thinking of yourself as a work of art might be the farthest thing from your mind. Your past and present struggles may haunt you, and you may be saying, “You don’t know the mess I’ve made of my life. I’m no work of art.” Let me tell you from personal experience, Jesus can and will make something beautiful out of our blunders, and masterpieces out of our mistakes! I’ll unwrap more of that on our third week together; but today let’s celebrate that He’s the Creator of all things! He is worthy of center-stage of our hearts and lives. He is worthy of the spotlight!-- Worthy of our adoration and affections. He is Jesus, the Savior of your soul, and the God who will take the canvas of your life and paint a masterpiece on it for His glory!

Group discussion directed by the following questions:

Delve:

1. Why do you think it's so important that you keep your focus on Jesus?
2. Let's pretend, you're a judge on America's Got Talent. Jesus just stood before you and did Creation, as His performance. What would you say to Him?
3. What would you like for your life-canvas to look like, at the end of this week? How about in two years? What about five years? Take time to thank God that He is painting a masterpiece out of the stuff of your life, so others can see how great He is.



[Week 3]

ABOVE

Dive:

"Jesus ABOVE Me."

Even though we moved on from Day One, we cannot move on from Jesus. He is what it's all about! Today we will learn why He deserves our unrivaled affection! Not only is Jesus the Creator of all things, but He is also the Sustainer of all things. The Bible says in **Hebrews 1:3** that He

"UPHOLDS THE UNIVERSE BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER."

I was watching a scientific television program that involved those whom they called the most brilliant minds in the world. The show was hosted by the infamous atheist Dr. Richard Dawkins, and famed physicist Dr. Stephen Hawking. On the program they were discussing the origins of the universe. I found what they said to be quite intriguing.

I am sure that you are aware that we live in a Heliocentric Sphere. We are in a universe that rotates around the sun. The sun, on its average, is 12,000° Fahrenheit. They said that the earth has an oblong rotation around the Sun. It's meticulously balanced at just the right distance from the sun that if it were to move one inch outside of that rotation we would either burn-up or freeze. The experts admitted they were perplexed about how the earth stays in a perfect orbit.--The Bible tells us that Jesus is holding it there by the word of His power!

Then, they said something that really displayed the power of Jesus. They said that the earth is tilted at a 23.5 °-angle. But, they said, it should not be tilted at a 23.5 °-angle, because it's physically impossible, due to the mass distribution of water weight around the globe. But, they were glad that it's tilted at 23.5°, because it gives us our four seasons. And if it were not titled at 23.5°, they said the events that would unfold would be monstrously catastrophic.

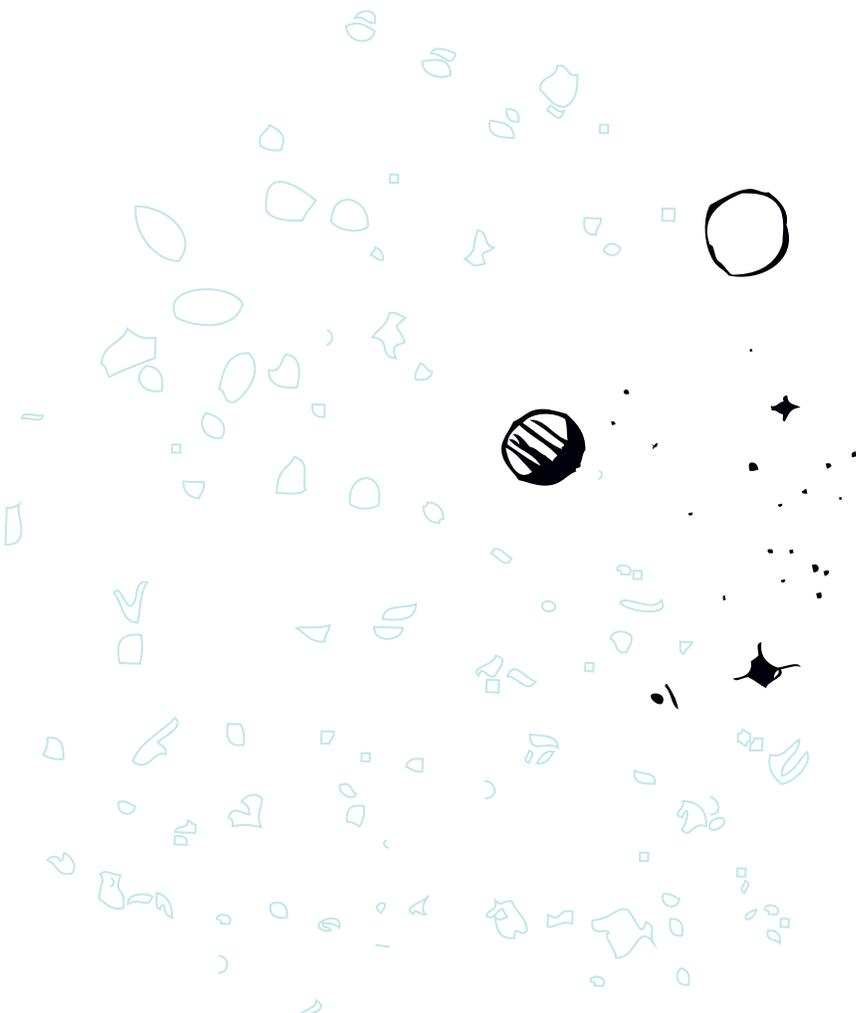
There's a whole world out there ignorantly screaming, "I don't need God. I don't need God!"-- WHAT?! Oh, yes, you do! You need Him to hold this world, tilted at a 23.5°-angle! The amazing thing is that He is holding it, and He isn't even breaking a sweat! Do you know what this means to you? It means that God specializes in operating in the realm of the impossible; and therefore we can entrust our lives to His care and control. There is nothing that, or no one who, can do what He can do for you. His power rises ABOVE money and man! He is

the Unrivaled, Life Sustaining God of the universe! It's not just a song.--He really does have "the whole world in His hands,"--including yours.

Group discussion directed by the following questions:

Delve:

1. What is one, big thing, going on in your life that you need to see God do the impossible in? Pray to Him about it, now.
2. Now, take a moment and write out what that issue is; and then write above it, "Jesus has this in His hands."
3. Our universe rotates around the sun. The Son of God deserves to be above everything else in our own, personal universes. Jesus deserves to be unrivaled. What should that look like in your everyday life?



[Week 4]

ME

Dive:

“Jesus above ME.”

He is the Creator of all things, the Sustainer of all things, and the Healer of our deepest pain. Time forbids, as do my abilities, to unwrap all the soteriological truths that are in **Hebrews 1:1-3**. But what can be said is that these verses provide a panoramic view of the redemptive intervention of Jesus

Christ to bring healing to the hearts of all, who suffer from the fall-out of a sin- cursed world. After His fight with the devil in the wilderness, Jesus is in the synagogue, quoting Isaiah 61, that He came to preach the Gospel to the poor and heal the broken-hearted. That is why the Psalmist exclaimed in **Psalms 147:3**,

**“HE CAME TO BIND-UP THE BROKEN-HEARTED
AND HEAL THEIR WOUNDS!”**

I can testify of His healing love.

Everybody’s story is different, but the hurt is the same--real and painful. I was born in a mental institution, son of a mentally-insane, homeless prostitute. Abandoned at birth, I suffered unimaginable abuse under the hands of sick, twisted, perverted predators. They beat me, sexually molested me, and tortured me with burning cigarettes. When I was one month shy of being four years old, I was adopted. My new parents adopted me for \$200. I am so grateful for them. But we grew-up in a neighborhood, my mom calls, “the ghetto.” It was a rough place to grow-up. My cousin’s boyfriend got his heart blown-out by a shot in the back. Another relative got shot at point-blank range in the head with a double- barrel, sawed-off shotgun.

My home-life was almost as terrorizing. To cope with our poverty my dad would get drunk; and when he did, he got violent. He would beat me and scream in my face, “Is this all \$200 got me?! I wish I would have never bought you!” Those words crushed me. That rejection was a catalyst that propelled me to live a self-sabotaging lifestyle of massive alcohol and

narcotic abuse. I wanted to be numb. I wanted to anesthetize the pain. But I soon came to a haunting realization that the highs never got stronger than the hurts! I wrestled with suicide. Which ended up landing me in a mental ward myself, in Goose Creek, SC. I was hurting so deeply.

Then, one day, someone told me about a Creator, a Sustainer, a Healer-- named, Jesus. He shared the Gospel with me. That night, February 24, 1989, I repented of my sin, received Christ's gift of salvation, and He healed the deepest wounds of my soul. I've always been haunted by the voice of my dad saying, "I wish I had never bought you!" That night God breathed in my heart with a loving, strong whisper, and said, "Tony, your dad hurt you by saying that he regretted buying you for \$200. Now, may you find healing in My words:--'I have never regretted purchasing you with the priceless blood of My Son.' " I am loved by God! I am treasured by Divinity--and so are you!

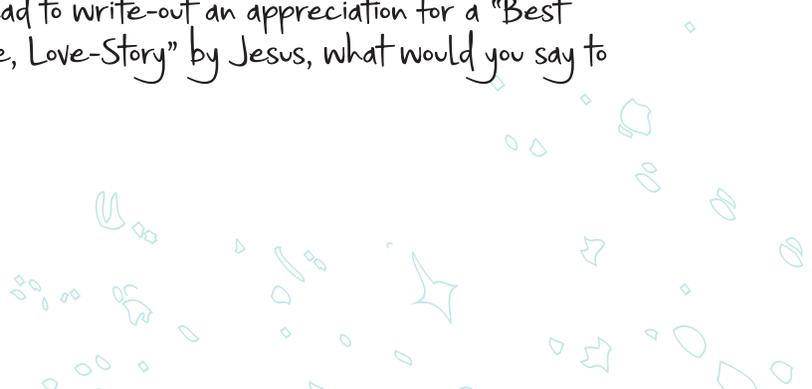
The Apostle Paul said it was the love of Christ that compelled him not to live for himself, but for others, so that they might experience life in Christ. Paul gave his life for the cause of Christ. God's love for us, displayed in Jesus, tells us He is worthy of our complete allegiance and adoration. Like John the Baptist, we should have a raging fire of adoration that causes us to put aside our selfish interests, wants, goals, desires, dreams, and self-absorbed affections, for whatever Jesus wants for our lives. He is worthy of every cost, we might pay to decrease, so that He may increase. The price He paid, to die for us, propels us to pay the price, to live for Him: a "Jesus above Me"-life.

Welcome to the family of JAM PEOPLE!

Group discussion directed by the following questions:

Delve:

1. Take a few minutes and write-out parts of your story. What was your life like, before you met Jesus? When did you meet Him? What difference has there been, or will there be, since you've surrendered to Jesus?
2. If you were presenting at the Oscars, and had to write-out an appreciation for a "Best Leading Performance in a Real-Life Rescue, Love-Story" by Jesus, what would you say to Him?



3. Read and sign the JAM PEOPLE CREED at www.jamtour.com, then go an create your group video reciting the Creed. Post a link on twitter with your Groups name saying, "This is Winter Jam" #JAMpeople

