THE JESUS CREED

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your **heart**,

with all your **soul**, with all your **mind**, and with all your **strength**."

The second is this: "*Love* your **neighbor** as yourself."

There is no commandment greater

than these.

Questions for Further Reflection

Opening Question: Take a few moments to think about the things in life that you are committed to that revolve primarily around an idea or conviction, and those that revolve primarily around a person? How are they similar or different? How hard is it to tease those things apart? Which one, in actual practice, is more dominate in the way you live out your faith?

Questions for Further Reflection
Study Guide 4

When you reflect on Ben Franklin's experience (see pages 183-184 in the book), what is there about his experience that you can identify with? Do you still find yourself in a similar place, or have you moved on from there? If you have moved on, what does that look like for you?

Consider how you generally hear the "Call of Jesus" in your life. . .

"As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a ne into the lake for they were fishermen.

     A. *"Come follow my teachings," Jesus said, "And I will make you fishers of*

       men."

     B. *"Come follow the fundamental points of belief, " Jesus said, "And I will make*

       You fishers of men."

     C. *"Come follow me, " Jesus said, "And I will make you fishers of men."*

                                                  -Mark 1:17

In Chapter 19 McKnight spends a lot of time with the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman and her personal faith. What additional insights do you find about the nature of faith and belief in John 5:39-40?

Notice the way the "message" or "Word" of God is described in the first chapter of John's gospel. What additional insights do you find here?

Questions for Further Reflection
Study Guide 4

Ponder again this well known story from Luke 10:38-42. Try to resist the common temptation to defend Martha, Martha's personality, or any other Marthaisms that arise in the story, and really listen to what Luke is trying to get us to see. What do you notice here?

Scot McKnight makes an important distinction between "informational" reading and "formational" reading. Take a few moments to compare and contrast the two.

Informational Approach   **Formational Approach**

Which form of communication (this can also apply to conversation as well as reading) is the kind would most like to have with a good friend? Which kind do you generally use in your own personal devotional study?

(NOTE: for an excellent book on how to read and study formationally, see Jan Johnson's book, "Savoring the Word of God.")

Questions for Further Reflection
Study Guide 4

Of course the classic passage of scripture for describing what it means to connect with Jesus, and remain in that stance of connectedness, is John 15:1-17. Take a few moments to read the passage (formationally, not just informationally) and see what surfaces for you. (Notice particularly the verses below—but don't feel limited to them):

15:1

15:4

15:5

15:7

15:9

15:16

In the next several chapters, Scot McKnight touches on various themes in the lives of those who are responding to and following Jesus. Take a few moments to reflect on each of themes listed below. Jot down your thoughts so you can share them when you gather together again.

Insights that resonated with me   **Things I am not so sure about:**

Surrender

Questions for Further Reflection
Study Guide 4

Insights that resonated with me   **Things I am not so sure about:**

Failure &

Restoration

Forgiving

Reaching Out

As you reflect on each of themes above, how would you go about them depending on whether you see them through "relational/formational" lenses (where it is about connecting to and staying connected with Jesus . . . . Or seeing them through more strictly "informational" lenses, where it is mostly about being, or convincing others about being "right"?

How do you keep "information" and "formation" in a healthy relationship with each other?

Where are the growing edges for you right now?