

# WELCOME TO ANIMATE!

This Facilitator Guide will help you make the most out of the videos and the Journal. As you prepare to dive into this session, keep these things in mind:

- You know your group best. Adjust the activities as needed based on the interests, questions, and background of group members.
- Get ready for creativity. The Journal is meant to be a right brain experience. Think of the animate experience as a journey through the content with many stopping points based on the questions, wonderings, and interests of the group.
- You don't have to know everything. As a facilitator, you don't have to be the expert, or even agree with everything the speakers say. Be ready to spark conversation and see where this takes the group as you explore these ideas together.
- Social media can help. Think of ways to use social media and other online tools to keep the conversation going. How about a Facebook group, a Twitter hashtag, or posts on Instagram or Pinterest?

## SESSION FLOW IDEAS

To get each session started, try this structure:

- Recap previous animate sessions or other learning experiences.
- Update the group on any between-session reflections or research.
- Explore the content on the first Journal spread.
- View the video.
- Dive into the rest of the Journal content together.

## SESSION TITLES

GOD | FAITH IS A QUEST

RELIGION | SPIRITUALITY IS NOT ENOUGH

## JESUS | THE REVOLUTION OF LOVE

SALVATION | ABUNDANT LIFE NOW







CROSS | WHERE GOD IS

BIBLE | A BOOK LIKE NO OTHER

CHURCH | AN IMPERFECT FAMILY

## ICON WATCH

Look for these icons that guide you in activities.

- 1.  – GROUP ACTIVITIES WITH QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO HELP ANIMATE CONVERSATION.
- 2.  – INTRODUCTORY AND OUT-GOING THOUGHTS TO SET-UP THE SESSION AND TO KEEP INTERACTIONS GOING BETWEEN SESSIONS.
- 3.  – LEADER TIPS: IDEAS TO HELP FACILITATORS FACILITATE.
- 4.  – FACTOIDS: INFORMATIONAL TIDBITS TO SPICE UP THE CONVERSATION.
- 5.  – QUOTES FROM THE VIDEO AND ELSEWHERE TO GET FOLKS THINKING.
- 6.  – FOOTNOTES: EXTRA BACKGROUND MATERIAL TO MAKE YOU SOUND EVEN SMARTER.



JESUS | THE REVOLUTION OF LOVE  
MARK SCANDRETTE

WHAT MIGHT YOU NEED TO RISK IN ORDER TO  
LIVE MORE FULLY IN THE REVOLUTION OF LOVE?

FOR BEST RESULTS

- Reproduce the Facilitator Guide in landscape format on 11x17 paper.
- Reproduce the Journal pages in landscape format on 8.5x11 paper.
- For both resources, use a color copier.



In the last session, Lillian asserted her belief that spirituality is not enough. In this session, Mark guides us to think differently about living in Jesus' way. It began with a moment of truth: Mark realized that his sermons weren't doing anything important. What to do?!? He decided to make church a place of practice rather than just belief and learning. The rest is history.

### HOW WILL YOU WELCOME YOUR GROUP?

Consider the architectural transition of the Journal throughout this session—from Gothic church to Dojo. How might that affect the way you set the room? Consider playing some music as people arrive, such as "Revolution" by the Beatles, anticipating Mark's "Revolution of Love."

Here's how the ReImagine website describes their ministry: "As a community we emphasize and pursue orthopraxis, a congruency of right belief and right living—resonating with the Apostle who said, 'Watch your life and doctrine closely, persevere in them.' (1 Timothy 4:16). We recognize that how we live is equally important to what we say we believe." Have your group open to 1 Timothy 4:4-16. Talk about how this text suggests action on behalf of the reader.

- What belief is most important to your faith?
- What actions does that belief suggest?

Mark talks about Jesus in a way that may be new to your group. He turns inactive, passive learning into active doing in the world. This kind of discipleship might be surprising for some people.. Talk about your group's perceptions of Jesus. How might a Jesus enshrined in stone cathedrals differ from the Jesus of the Gospels?



"THE KIND OF LIFE THAT JESUS LIVED AND INVITES US INTO IS IMPOSSIBLE. AND MAYBE IT IS, APART FROM A SOURCE OF LOVE AND POWER THAT'S GREATER THAN OUR OWN. BUT THE ONLY WAY WE'RE GOING TO DISCOVER THAT LOVE AND POWER IS BY TAKING THE RISK TO TRY AND LIVE INTO THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL."

—MARK SCANDRETTE

Soren Kierkegaard once sat in the state church in Copenhagen. The Bible was gilded. The sanctuary had silk and velvet appointments and ornate stained glass. Someone read scripture quoting God, "I do not dwell in temples made with hands." Kierkegaard responded by saying, "I looked around, and no one was laughing!" Talk together about these types of experiences. Sketch yourselves into the pews and ponder whether you have ever had one of those moments when the raw truth of scripture or Christian truth suddenly struck you as incongruous with the reality of church.

OUR TOPIC IS JESUS, THE MASTER, the center of Christian passion and for some, a very emotional subject. Take time to know your emotions and convictions concerning Jesus before you welcome your group. Remember your role: animate the conversation!

Jesus turned many cultural norms upside down and provided new and unexpected ways of thinking about things. This was a risky venture, and it made the rulers of the day feel like their power was being threatened. Form three groups based on the story sketches in the Journal: Woman at the Well (John 4), Zacchaeus (Luke 19), and Lazarus (John 11). Ask each group to create a contemporary version of their story as a skit or sketch. Talk about how these stories relate to society today.

- Who is a modern example of each character in these stories?
- How might Jesus respond to each if he were around today?
- Read John 17:14-18. When does being a Christ follower feel like risky business?





## WHERE ARE PEOPLE AT WITH JESUS?

Before you watch the video, invite your group to share from memory some of their favorite scenes from the Gospels. Then have the group free associate verbs that describe the actions of Jesus. Have one member record the verbs on a whiteboard or chart paper. Throughout this session, center your energies on doing!

## Watch the video together.

Have someone write the verbs and scenes Mark features on the same white board or chart paper you used before the video. Compare your group's ideas and views with Mark's. He and his church try to read the Bible to find not only what Jesus people *believe*, but especially what Jesus people *practice*. Mark and his community did some unexpected and unusual things, like selling half their possessions and sharing private failings with one another.

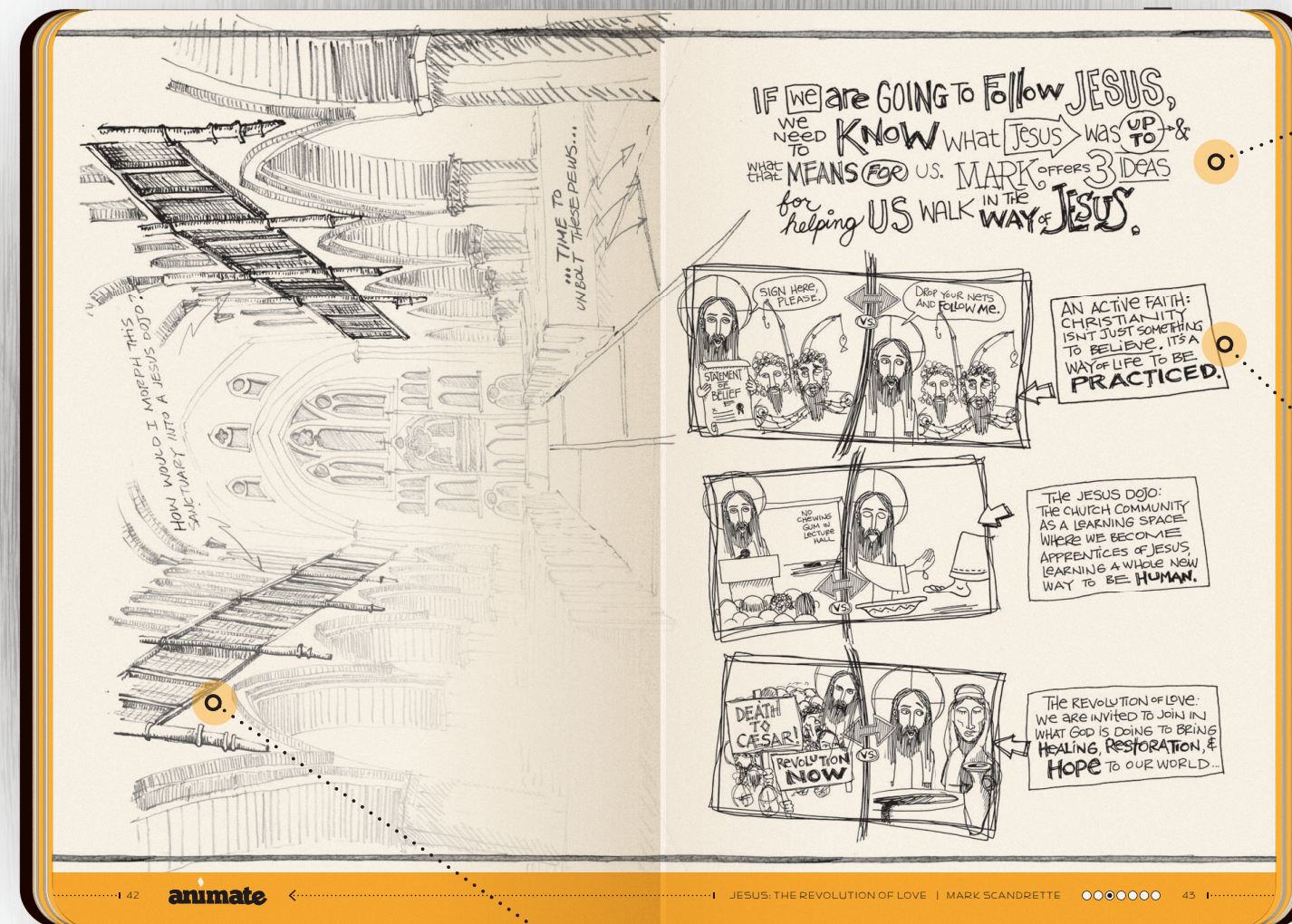
- What unusual or unexpected things did Jesus do?
- What unusual things does Jesus inspire you to do?



Mark encourages us to think outside the church. His image of the Jesus Dojo puts Christianity into a fully active environment. You don't just sit and learn in a dojo; you do.

- When you are in worship, what do you feel drawn to? Spending more time in worship in a sanctuary? Going out into the world? Just going home? Why is that?
- Do you ever feel like churches are boxes that confine Jesus? Why or why not?
- How can you morph a church building into a place that "does," not just a place that "is"?
- How does Mark's concept of the Jesus Dojo interact with this idea?

THE FIRST "CHURCH" BUILDINGS WERE BUILT AFTER CONSTANTINE MADE CHRISTIANITY THE OFFICIAL RELIGION OF ROME IN 311 C.E. BEFORE THAT, BEING CHRISTIAN COULD BE DANGEROUS. A CHURCH BUILDING WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE A BIG TARGET, SO CHRISTIANS MET IN PRIVATE HOMES.



NOTICE HOW CATHEDRAL IS BEGINNING to morph into dojo on this page? In 1896 the architect Louis Sullivan said, "form follows function." Check out the directions for renovation in the Journal. How would your group further the transformation? Invite them to sketch or note their thoughts.



Have your group look over these three contrasting versions of Jesus ministry—the authentic one on the right versus our modern permutations to the left. What happened between then and now? Do the original accounts offer anything to help us reclaim the way of Jesus? Divide up the group to read Luke 5:1-11, John 13:1-17, and John 4. Invite the group to replace or modify the "ideas" to the left with a modern practice that's more consistent with walking in Jesus' way.



Dietrich Bonhoeffer required his seminary students to meditate on each day's Bible passage long enough to discern what God wanted them to do. Give this a try in your group. Have everyone chose one of the scenes from the Gospels depicted in the first two spreads of this session. Have them find and silently read their passage. Keep the focus on what we could DO, not what we think or believe. Simply, what does this part of the Jesus story prompt me to DO? Try to gracefully push your group past the hypothetical into actual and accountable practices. Allow time for people to share.





## THE JOURNAL HELPS US ASK, “WHO IS JESUS?”

This is both a question of truth and a personal question we need to ask ourselves. Who is Jesus? And who is Jesus to me? Mark wants to move us from belief into practice, but he does not want us to stop believing or talking about belief. So here's the time to ask who Jesus is.

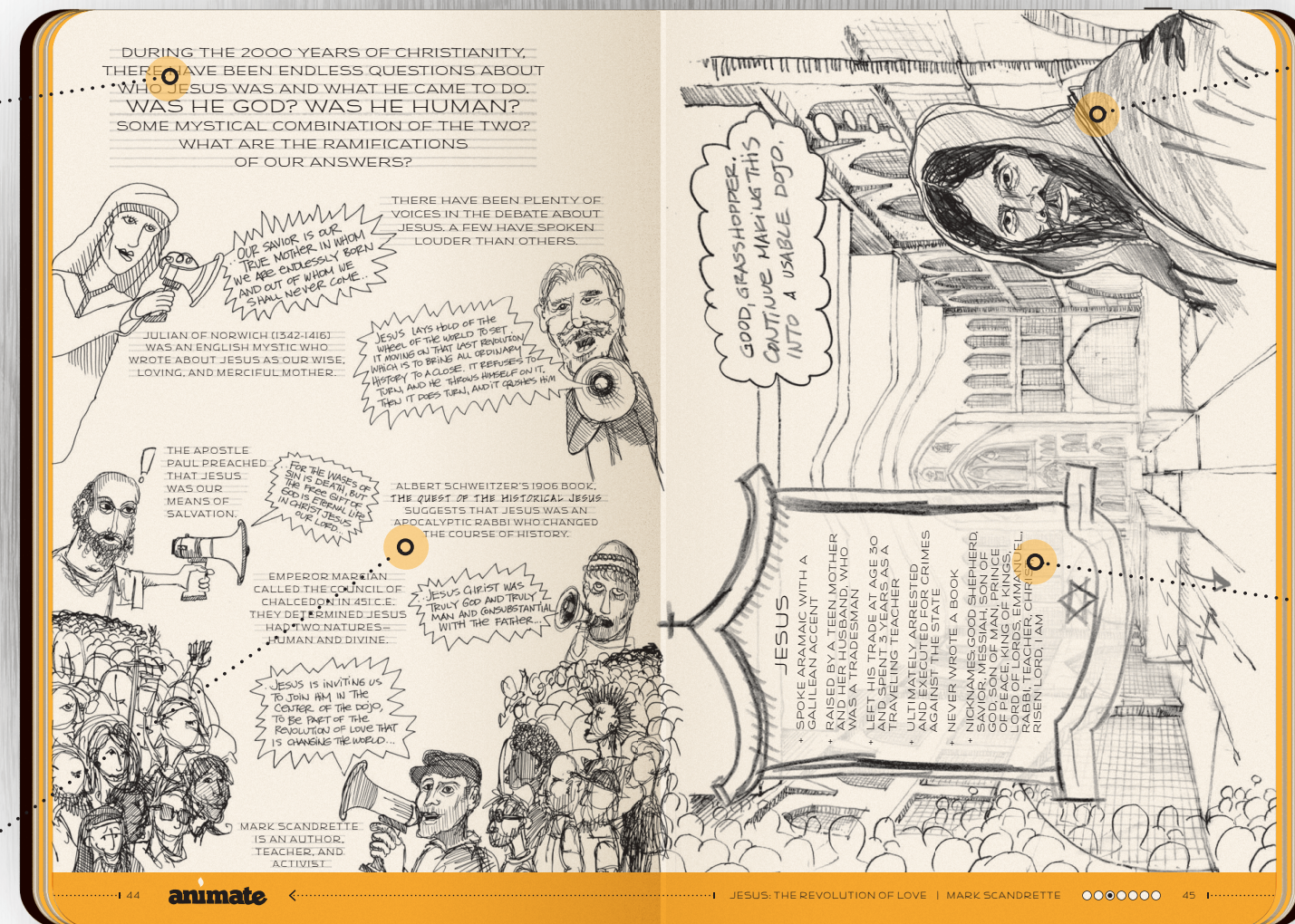
- Read through the five visions of Jesus in the Journal together. Give group members time to rate or give weight to the views of Jesus they most relate to in the Journal. The Confession of Chalcedon (451) calls Jesus “perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body.”
- Why does it matter how we define the divinity and humanity of Jesus?
  - Discuss the problem of a merely human Jesus, stuck in the bookstore next to all the other wise self-help gurus.
  - Discuss the place of the only divine Jesus, walking a foot above ground—much too far from the daily issues of living that you and I face.

THE QUESTION ANSWERED AT CHALCEDON WAS NOT INVENTED IN THE FIFTH CENTURY. THE CONVERSATION BEGAN WITH FIRST-CENTURY BIBLICAL PICTURES OF JESUS' DIVINITY LIKE JOHN 1:1-5, 14, 18; HEBREWS 1:1-4; AND PHILIPPIANS 2:6-11.



## CONVERSATION ABOUT THESE FIVE

different views of Jesus might seem to make Jesus into an inkblot whose identity is completely dependent on the eye of the beholder. Listen for that in your group. Be ready to talk about the parameters that the Gospels set for understanding who Jesus is. For example, Jesus as military conqueror (as in Constantine and the Crusades) doesn't work well with Mark 8:31ff., where Jesus insists that he was sent not to conquer but to die.



- Have group members flip through the Gospels to find three pieces of evidence that Jesus was divine and three pieces of evidence that Jesus was human. Allow some time for people to share what they found. Then look up Mark 15:40. In this verse, a Roman soldier at the cross watches Jesus breathe his last breath and says, “Surely this man was the Son of God.”
- How can suffering and divinity coexist in Jesus?
  - How would Jesus' experience have been different if he was wholly divine? What about if he was wholly human?
  - Who is Jesus to YOU? Add your own face and one sentence expression of faith to your Journal.

- Beginning in the first century, Christians identified some beliefs as outside the circle. These were later named “heresy.” The letter we call 2 John warns about “those who don't believe Jesus came in the flesh.” Some people think the writer is responding to an early version of “Docetism,” the belief that Jesus only appeared to be fully human, but was really more of a spirit. Through the centuries, the church has often drawn lines like this.
- Add some bullet points to the “JESUS” list of things you know or believe about Jesus.
  - Are there any views of Jesus that you consider to be “heresy”? Why or why not?
  - How might your personal views of Jesus be considered “heretical” by other people?
  - Jesus' ministry was all about crossing boundaries. What boundaries is Jesus calling you to cross? What does that say about who Jesus is to you?

“INSTEAD OF BRINGING IN THE ESCHATOLOGICAL CONDITIONS, JESUS HAS DESTROYED THEM. THE WHEEL ROLLS ONWARD, AND THE MANGLED BODY OF THE ONE IMMEASURABLY GREAT MAN... IS HANGING UPON IT STILL. THAT IS HIS VICTORY AND HIS REIGN.” —ALBERT SCHWEITZER

✶ If you want more views of Jesus to talk about, St. Francis painted a picture of Jesus as Pauper. She said, “I married Lady Poverty, widowed since Christ.” Or you could see Jesus as Macho Man in books like *No More Mr. Christian Nice Guy* and *The Church Impotent—the Feminization of Christianity*. These authors picture Jesus as very macho with big biceps and tattoos.

For more information, check out Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture*.



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“IF I WAS GOING TO BE PART OF THIS REVOLUTION OF LOVE THAT JESUS EMBODIED AND PROMISED, I WOULD NEED TO BE MORE HONEST, MORE ACTIVE, AND MORE CONNECTED TO OTHER PEOPLE.”  
—MARK SCANDRETTE

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## YOU HAVE ASKED ABOUT

Jesus' identity and puzzled over the tension between his divinity and humanity. Now you can help the group make a transition into daily life. What impact does what we know about Jesus have on who we are and what we do in the world? This transition from theory to practice fits perfectly with Mark's emphasis on ortho-praxis—right doing.



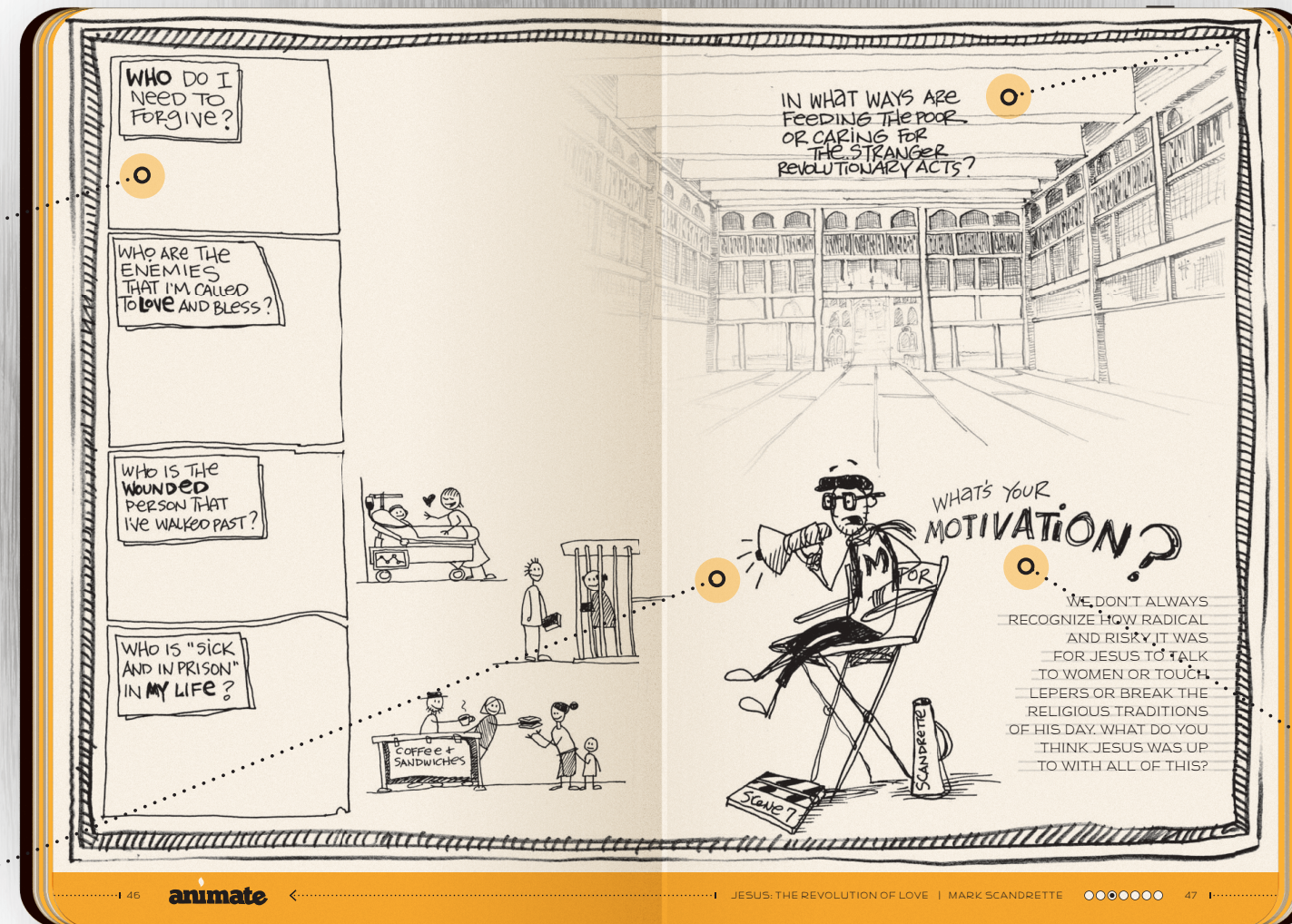
Give the group some scriptural groceries to take with them this week as they continue to digest Mark's ideas and their own ideas about Jesus. Ground the actions in the scriptures that give rise to them. Encourage group members to write these scriptures in their Journals to read as they work through this spread this week.

Forgive—Matthew 18:21-35  
(The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant)  
Enemies—Matthew 5:43-48  
(The Sermon on the Mount)  
Wounded—Luke 10:25-37  
(The Parable of the Good Samaritan)  
Sick and in Prison—Matthew 25:31-40  
(The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats)



Choose a couple of questions below to talk about in the group. Then encourage the group to think about the others throughout the week.

- What will fuel your Jesus actions?
- What does the divine-human Jesus have to do with the problems you face and the problems in your community?
- What about who Jesus was and the message he shared gives you hope that good intentions won't wilt in the light of day?
- Where would Jesus go first if he landed in your community today? Where do you think he's calling you to go?



BELIEFS FUEL ACTIONS. NEW YORK TIMES OP-ED COLUMNIST NICHOLAS KRISTOF REFLECTED ON HIS TRAVELS TO IMPOVERISHED AND SUFFERING POPULATIONS AROUND THE WORLD INCLUDING AIDS PATIENTS IN AFRICA, TSUNAMI VICTIMS IN JAPAN, AND SEX SLAVES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE SUMMED UP WHAT HE SAW, SAYING, “THE RELIGIOUS PEOPLE STAY AND HELP LONGER.” KRISTOF IS RIGHT. WHY? BECAUSE ONCE THE IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND THE RUSH OF NEWS COVERAGE FADE, “STAYING LONGER” REQUIRES A CONVICTION ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF OUR LIVES, ABOUT HOW GOD LOVES THE PEOPLE SERVED.



Read together John 9. This is by far the longest account of any of Jesus' healings. All the way through this chapter people are being challenged by Jesus' revolutionary love. Jesus takes calculated risks along the way, beginning with a course of treatment that breaks a number of Sabbath laws (9:5-7)!  
• Of all the characters, who do you most relate to?  
• What do you think was Jesus' motivation in healing this blind man?  
• What would be the most challenging part of living in the way of Jesus?  
• In what ways are healing the sick and feeding the poor revolutionary acts?



## PREPARE YOUR PEOPLE TO GO

beyond good intentions. Help them make a plan to go humbly to the people they list and seek reconciliation. Encourage them to read around in the Gospels and actually imagine that the picture of Jesus should be imprinted in THEIR lives.



Healthy motivations matter to God. While the church is commonly thought to be expert at motivating through guilt and threat of punishment, this is not the way of Jesus. Passages like John 13:34-35 and John 14:15-17 speak to the motivation of love and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.





## THIS IS WHERE YOU IMAGINE WITH YOUR GROUP

what their week looks like in light of the Jesus Dojo/Revolution of Love. How will they continue the good that God has been doing in and among them beyond your time together? Finish where Mark finishes, asking his pointed questions. Prepare the group to take one more step from the classroom into an active, Jesus-centered life.



Mark didn't go on this journey by himself. He got together with friends and with other faithful people to turn his life into a Revolution of Love. Work together through the following questions Mark asks at the end of the video and encourage your group to continue doing so beyond their time in the classroom.

Ask: Who can you get in the dojo to take those new risks with? Journal a list of people you want to have as practice partners. Emphasize that this is not an academic exercise. There's a big difference between talking about doing the Jesus thing and actually giving ourselves over to Master Jesus in the Dojo. This is the beginning of a commitment to practice what Master Jesus teaches.

Ask: Where do you most long for change in your life or healing for our world? Prayer and discernment do not usually resolve themselves in 30-second intervals. Prepare your group to be patient and to look long enough at their lives and the world to really hear their own heart beating in the "unforced rhythms of grace."

Ask: What might you need to risk in order to live more fully in the Revolution of Love that Jesus promised? Jesus told a parable about a man who built half a building and then ran out of money. Counting the cost is crucial to the realistic step from theory to practice. Calculate the risk. Identify the entanglements. Ask if they're ready to risk it. Have them journal these important steps.



"THE PROMISE OF THE GOSPEL IS THAT WE CAN LEARN A WHOLE NEW WAY TO BE HUMAN, TO LIVE WITHOUT WORRY, FEAR, GREED, LUST, OR ANGER—TO LIVE A LIFE ANIMATED AND EMPOWERED BY LOVE."

—MARK SCANDRETTE



Re-create the conversation among Mark's friends that he mentions having after his Jesus Dojo epiphany. Talk about how your faith community could join in on Jesus' Revolution of Love. Whether in the closing moments of this session or between sessions, agree to hold one another accountable to one group or individual practice in the way of Jesus.



## BRAINSTORMING CONVERSATIONS

like this one have the ability to change how people think about things. Keep in mind those people who might think this activity is just filler and find ways to invite them into the conversation in meaningful ways. Inspire participants to commit to this idea.

Mark's animating questions are huge. They are life changing. All conversation about practicing what we believe is ongoing. We are people in progress, so encourage continued dialog with the Journal and one another between sessions. But be sure to press your group past the talking into the doing. As they continue to live in Jesus' Revolution of Love, they can begin to wonder about the abundant life of salvation they'll hear about in the next session.