**Series:** The Journey

**Week 4:** Journey Inward

**Big Idea:** Every journey shape who we become.

**Icebreaker Questions**

1. What movie made the greatest impact on you and why? Give your group time to answer this question; it will play a role late in the discussion.
2. Today we are discussing something that may be new to you - Spiritual Formation. Are any of you familiar with that term? If so, how would you describe it?

**Watch Week 4 Video (8-10 minutes) of the Journey –** [**www.rccsalem.com/the-journey**](http://www.rccsalem.com/the-journey)

**Discussion Questions**

Let’s start by saying that Spiritual Formation and Spiritual direction primarily comes from a desire to be in the presence of Jesus.

* Could you describe for us a formative moment when you longed to be in the presence of Jesus? What was it like to be in His presence?

“The spiritual life begins with the longing that stirs way down deep, underneath the noise, the activity, the drivenness of our lives . . . The stirring of spiritual desire indicates that God’s Spirit is already at work within us, drawing us to himself.” Ruth Haley Barton – *Invitation to Retreat*

* What desire, in your life, are you most aware of right now?

**Guided Prayer Experience**

**Leaders say** - I want to invite you to close your eyes and put yourself in the story of Bartimaeus. Close your eyes. I’m going to read Mark 10:46-53. Please keep your eyes closed until the end of the prayer experience. I’ll read the text and give you some questions and statements to consider.

**Read Mark 10:46-52 (Slowly and reflectively)**

Leader say (Slowly. Allow your group to consider what you are asking them to do.)

* Imagine yourself on the dusty road . . .
* Calling out to Jesus form the noisy crowd . . .
* Hearing voices trying to silence you . . .
* Being called by Jesus . . .
* Throwing off your cloak and running to Jesus . . .
* What words do you cry out to him?
* What tries to silence you?
* What do you need to throw off in order to come to Jesus?

Hearing Jesus ask you, “What do you want me to do for you?”……What would you say in response? What does Jesus say to you in response to your desire?

If you haven’t been able to name your desire, just stay with Jesus and listen to what he has to say to you. If you have trouble getting in touch with your desire, it might help you to begin with the statement - **“What I most need/want from You right now is …”**

**Life Group Leader** - Invite your group to open their eyes and take some time to debrief the prayer exercise.

1. What was that experience like for you?
2. Did you feel comfortable sharing what your desire is?
3. What part of Bartimaeus story do you relate to most strongly or even resist most strongly relative to the desire you are naming?

This week - Focus on being aware of God’s presence. From the moment we wake up until the moment we go to bed, we are in the midst of God’s presence and are invited to journey with Him.