

Jeanette Howard - Fear no. 4  
Being known and accepted

Read: 1 John 1: 5 - 7

We can choose what people know about us! Jeanette gave us some things to know about herself.  
(how well were we listening? Can anyone remember?!)

Called Jeanette

Lived in California for 3 years

One of 4

Trained as a teacher in Eastbourne “you may know about me but you don't know me!

Never been married

Never had children

Loves the programme shooting stars!

You know some facts, but you don't know Jeanette! She gave us some insights into her personality.  
She said she can be brash, blunt, sometimes overstepping the mark!

If asked to describe her personality you wouldn't know how unless you really knew her.

Can each person in the group give 4 facts about themselves that others wouldn't know?

How would you describe each others personalities in the group?

Jeanette has changed over the years – she previously had a self belief that said “If you know me you would reject me – therefore she would never have ventured an opinion, and only shared things she was safe to share”. “I will reject you before you reject me”.

Trouble is this is very isolating! We build a thick wall which people can't penetrate. (discuss)

Living as a chameleon – being one thing to one person and another thing to someone else. (discuss)

Living with pretence - inventing bits of story to make our lives acceptable. (discuss)

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John

1 John 1: 5 -7

2 things – we have fellowship with each other, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

Jesus calls the fisherman, and other men to be his disciples. We know that Jesus spent the next 3 years every day with these men.

John was one of Jesus closest friends – he was there at many of the very key times of Jesus' life. He went all the way with Jesus – to the foot of the cross. He was so confident in Jesus' love, acceptance and being known he could say this. He write about God's love, how we receive it, retain it and share it.

We are commanded to love one another as Jesus has loved us. This is an amazing challenge!  
(discuss)

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Jeanette shared some of her story. As she had suppressed her homosexuality for many years she arrived at bible college and it all came to the surface. She felt she had to share it with someone so she went to the leaders of the college to tell them, but they already knew. How? God had already told them! (Does anyone have examples of a similar experience of God speaking about your life to others!). [How do we feel about that?](#)

God then told Jeanette to tell her parents she was gay.

Then go and tell her church that she was gay.

The church was totally accepting of who she was. When Jeanette shared it opened the way for many others to become honest about who they really were.

Transparency

Vulnerability

[What do these 3 words mean?](#)

Honesty

Jeanette is looking to move to Eastbourne and become part of our fellowship.

She feels this is because she wants to become part of a fellowship like ours and grow in the Lord.

But also to return to the place where she had many relationships and a past colourful history. [Why is this? \(It is not in order to rekindle past relationships or restart her past life but to live in the light\)](#)

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Jeanette's challenge for our fellowship:

[DISCUSSION SECTION: This will need sensitive, prayerful steering by the leader.](#)

What happens if someone comes to the church that has for example a sexual preference for minors?

Jeanette shared from 1 John about walking in the darkness – if people are not able to be real about who they are they are walking in the darkness. They are not able to walk in the light. Is Jesus only saying walk in the light you 90% but you 10% walk in the shadow. Do we have the right to condemn people to live in the shadows?

Will there be difficulties? Of course they will be! Look at South Africa and apartheid.

Will we conform to society and tell the “unacceptable” people to be silent and struggle in silent or will we allow people to be changed by the blood of Jesus to be accepted here and grow in the Lord.

Can we imagine the power if all at the fellowship committed to walk in the light? “WELCOME ALL”

Love one another so all men will know we are disciples are Christ.

How far as individuals are we willing to go?

How far as a congregation are we willing to go?

Are we willing to commit to transparent living? Big question

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End session with:

In you there is no darkness in you there is freedom from sin. Through you we can say no to temptation and yes to you. We know that as we come together in unity of spirit in one mind with one purpose to glorify you, you will continue to change and transform us by the power of your holy spirit. Where things we thought impossible will become possible. Where people become healed and in the process offer hope to others. Your word is clear we are to walk in the light as Jesus is in the light, we will be cleansed from all sin, and we will have fellowship one with another, So no one thinks "if you knew me you would reject me". Our longing to know and be known fulfilled. May God guide us and lead us as individuals and as a church. Not an easy call, not an easy walk. But what a privilege to walk as Jesus walked. Amen