

Following Jesus...He's More than a Superstar!

We get excited and passionate about a lot of things. Whether it is hobbies, sports stars, musicians, actors, or other interests, we grow absorbed and gather as much information as possible about what we follow. In modern days of social media and constant information influx, it is easy to learn more about celebrities or teams. There's nothing inherently wrong with paying attention to famous people or being engaged in interests. The danger comes if those things start becoming idols and replacing God in importance. It is tough for kids to comprehend sacrifice, but also important that they be introduced to the concept. This lesson takes a look at a couple of slightly challenging passages in the gospel of Luke, focusing on the principle of following Jesus above all else.

Age Range: Elementary school, adjustable to various ages or groups

Materials Required: Pictures of celebrities and sports teams, a compass, card stock crosses, decorative materials

Scripture Reference: Luke 9:51-62; Luke 14:25-34

Opening: What do you follow and how...choose what kind of activity might best suit your students and preferences. You might focus on the "fan-dom" element or the follower bit:

- Present students with several pictures of celebrity actors or singers. See how many the students recognize. You might even do this in teams, seeing who can identify the most people.
- Play a matching game...show students pictures of sports mascots, and have them try to match the mascot with the team that they represent. To make it more challenging, show only a small bit of the picture or the colors of the team.
- Play a mime game...this could be done one on one or in a group. Have a leader make a motion or a facial expression, and encourage the other students to copy it. See how well they can follow along mimicking things that are done.
- Play old fashioned "Simon Says," encouraging students to do things that might seem extra challenging.
- "What's your excuse" game...Jesus heard some attempted excuses people made when He asked who would follow Him. Someone wanted to wait or to say goodbye to family first...none of this was enough. To consider the element of trying to make excuse stories, give children a scenario (missing out on something like school, a practice, or a meeting) and have them come up with an excuse as to why they were "absent."

Explain to students that today they will be talking about what it means to follow someone, and why it is important to follow Jesus.

Lesson: What does it mean to follow someone? Ask students who gives directions and how they know what to do when someone gives them instructions. Jesus enjoyed spending time with His disciples and developing relationships with them. He also gave them important instructions and notes about how they should follow Him...

As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.⁵³ And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him;⁵⁴ but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem.⁵⁴ When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them^{lu}?”⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and rebuked them.⁵⁶ Then he and his disciples went to another village. -Luke 9:51-56

Sometimes the disciples were misguided in how zealous they were about serving their leader. They got excited about the idea of following Jesus, but did not always realize the full extent of what that meant. Here, Jesus was rejected. He wanted the disciples to understand that they would have to make sacrifices, too. But instead they wanted to approach things with violence. Jesus silenced their enthusiasm, and they moved on. But there was still some confusion over how much it might mean to follow this Master.

Take a moment to discuss things that students follow or pay attention to. How do they keep up with things surrounding those objects of affection? How closely do they track or know about what interests them? We might put a lot of effort and attention into things that we value. But do we put the same effort into following Jesus? How can we truly follow Him?

⁵⁷As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

⁵⁸Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

⁵⁹He said to another man, “Follow me.”

But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

⁶⁰Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

⁶¹Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.”

⁶²Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.” -Luke 9:57-62

In order to follow Jesus, we must be willing to leave behind other things. This is called “sacrifice.” For instance, if we wanted to go to a concert that happened to fall on the same day as another fun event, we would have to pick the activity most important to us and sacrifice, or let go of the other activity. In the Christian life, nothing should come before Jesus, and we must be willing to make

sacrifices in order to sincerely follow Him. Jesus says this same thing in further detail a little later in the Gospel:

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said:²⁶ “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.²⁷ And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.....²⁸ In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. -Luke 14:25-27; 33

This might sound a little harsh...we know we should not hate people, especially those in our families! Jesus is not necessarily telling people that they should really hate their parents...He is merely stating how important it is to follow Him. If people cannot give them full attention and have a willingness to let go of other things, it can be distracting to truly obey Him. Following Him means reading His word, recognizing what He has said, and honoring His directions daily.

Ask kids if they have ever been hiking or traveling. How did they know where to go? Hold up a map and/or a compass. What do these tools do? They help us find our way! The Bible is God’s word. It tells us what Jesus did and said, and what God says. If we keep our hearts focused on that word, it will guide us to God’s blessings in our lives!

Craft: Make a cross bookmark to remember God’s guiding work in our lives. Have large cross-shaped cardstock pre-cut, and allow students to decorate the crosses with color, stickers, etc. Attach a caption: options include Psalm 119:105 (Your word is a light unto my path) or another verse or slogan like “Jesus guides me to the true North” or “I follow the leadership of Jesus!” encourage students to use the bookmarks as reminders of God’s work in their lives.

Close with prayer, thanking God for the work of Jesus on our behalf, and asking for help in following Him closely and being willing to let go of other things.

We hope you enjoy this free resource.

Everything from Ministry-To-Children.com is 100% free to copy & use in ministry.



I'm Tony Kummer - I started this website in 2007, but God is using it beyond my imagination. The mission is simple.

Help you tell kids about Jesus!

Our team is honored that you choose our material. Thank you for ...

- serving where God has placed you.
- telling children about Jesus.
- allowing us to be a part of your mission.

We don't ask for money, but we do need your help.

Please consider the following:

1. Comment on the website to encourage our authors.
2. Link to us from your blog or church website.
3. Share our posts on Pinterest or Facebook.
4. Tell a friend to google "Ministry to Children."
5. Add me (and our team) to your personal prayer list.

Ministry-To-Children



I'd love to hear your feedback on this download. Tony@ministry-to-children.com

May God bless you and continue to bless your ministry!