

THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS | Matthew 8; 16; Luke 9; 14

Memory Verse: ²⁵“All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

JOHN 14:25-26

Big Picture Question: What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?

Bottom Line: I do what Jesus says even when it is hard.

Christ Connection: *Jesus taught that following Him is not easy. It requires commitment and sacrifice. When we trust in Jesus, we give Him complete control of our lives. True life is found in Jesus, who gave up His life to rescue us from sin and death. He is worth it.*

10 Minutes SOCIAL: SETTING THE TONE OF THE EXPERIENCE

Throw Throw Burrito

What You Need: Game box, foam balls or bean bags (2 per group)

What You Do:

- Follow directions in the game box.

What You Say ” That was so much fun. You guys are really good at playing games together. In our stories coming up we are going to talk about things Jesus did well. He was a good teacher, shepherd, and miracle worker. Let’s get our stuff cleaned up and get ready to watch our video today.”

10 Minutes Worship: CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING

SONGS, OFFERING AND PRAYER

15 Minutes LARGE GROUP: COMMUNICATING GOD’S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS

SERIES THEME

In this series, we are looking at the teachings of Jesus and the difference that they make in our lives.

TODAY’S BOTTOM LINE

I do what Jesus says even when it is hard

CONTEXT

The benefits of following Jesus are wonderful: justification from sin, lifelong sanctification, and adoption into the family of God. But following Jesus also comes at a price. People had waited so long for the promised Messiah to come into the world, so many were eager to follow Him. Yes as Jesus taught, He urged people to consider the cost of being His disciple.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus explained to one disciple that following Him might involve giving up worldly comforts. He told another disciple that following Him should be higher priority than anything else- even one’s commitment to his parents. (See Matt 8:18-22) In Matthew 16 and Luke 9, Jesus told His disciples, “If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”

Jesus shared two examples in Luke 14 of people who must count the cost of doing something. If a person is building a tower, he must first calculate the cost. If he begins the project and is unable to complete it, onlookers will ridicule him. In a similar way, a king counts the cost of going to war before sending his army. If he is not able to oppose the enemy, he doesn’t foolishly send out a small group to fight a larger group. Instead, he seeks peace.

Many who wanted to follow Jesus changed their minds. Jesus even asked the twelve disciples if they wanted to turn away as well. Peter answered, “Lord, to whom will we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68)

Paul acknowledged the difficulty of following Jesus in 2 Corinthians 4 but kept his eyes on eternity: "For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an incomparable eternal weight of glory" (v.17). As you teach, emphasize that following Jesus is not easy, but He is worth it.

TODAY'S TAKEAWAYS

- Following Jesus isn't always easy, but it is always best.
- If we want to live for Him then we must do what He says.
- When what we want to do is different than Jesus' Words, we should do what He says.
- **Bottom Line:** I do what Jesus says even when it is hard.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus taught that following Him is not easy. It requires commitment and sacrifice. When we trust in Jesus, we give Him complete control of our lives. True life is found in Jesus, who gave up His life to rescue us from sin and death. He is worth it.

PRAYER AND TIME OF COMMITMENT

Give kids a chance to believe in Jesus for the first time. Remind them that God loves them so much that He sent Jesus to earth to pay for their sins. Lead them to pray as you pray. Pray that believers will submit their lives to the Holy Spirit, follow Jesus, and tell others about Him.

25 Minutes SMALL GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Discussion Questions:

- **Jesus said the Son of Man has no place to what?** (*lay His head, Matt. 8:20*)
- **What did Jesus say a person must take up to follow Him?** (*his cross, Matt. 16:24*)
- **What did Jesus say about a king going to war?** (*He must consider whether his army can win, Luke 14:31*)
- **Why do you think we must be willing to give up our family and even our life to follow Jesus?** *Guide kids to see that Jesus is the most important. If we truly love our families, we will want to put Jesus first so that we can help them see that He is best for them. If we love anything, even families or other good things, more than we love Jesus, those things have become idols.*
- **What are some ways you might suffer for Jesus' sake?** *Discuss what can happen if kids stand up for what's right against friends or other kids at school. Discuss missionaries who move away from home. Talk about places where Christians are not allowed to worship God and might be arrested or killed for their faith.*
- **What do we gain by following Jesus?** *Help kids think about the rewards we have through Jesus, both in this life and the next. Remind them that Jesus gives us peace, love, joy, and wisdom. Help them see that no matter what hard situations we face now, someday we will rule with Jesus when He returns.*

Activity: Cross Reminders

What You Need "Cross Reminders" printable (1 per kid), 1 inch wide paper cut in 12" strip and 6" inch strip two different paper colors (1 of each color paper strip per kid (1- 6" and 1-12")), scissors, 1/8" wide purple ribbon cut in 8" strips per kid, glue dots or glue sticks, ruler, scotch tape

What You Do:

- Distribute supplies and the “Cross Reminders” printable.
- Glue together the ends of the 12 inch strip.
- Glue together the ends of the 6 inch strip.
- Slide the 6 inch loop about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way down the 12 inch loop. Glue it in place to form a cross shape.
- Wrap an 8 inch strip of ribbon around the intersection of the cross. Use glue to secure the ribbon to the back of the cross (or tape)

What You Say “Jesus told His disciples, “If anyone wants to follow after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.” Jesus taught that following Him is not easy. It requires commitment and sacrifice.

When we believe in Jesus for life, we give Him complete control of our lives. True life is found in Jesus, who gave up His life to rescue us from sin and death. He is worth it. Let’s look at our discussion questions now to find ways to do this in our lives.”

Activity: Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Memory Verse Poster, minute to win it games (choose one)

What You Do:

- Set up the minute to win it game of your choice today.
- Use the masking tape to mark a tossing line.
- Ask kids to line up behind the taped line.
- As kids come up to the line, they have 1 minute to say the memory verse, if they get it mostly correct they can take a turn trying the minute to win it game.
- The next person in line gets a turn next.
- If you want to keep score ask kids to keep track of how many balls made it in the cups or were shot.

What You Say ” Jesus spoke our memory verse to His disciples before He went to the cross. Jesus wanted them to know what to expect. Jesus knew that they would have trouble remembering all the wonderful things He taught about God and God’s kingdom. That’s why Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us. He lives within us when we believe in Jesus for life, and He helps us understand and remember God’s truth.”

Pray and Dismiss:

What You Need: no supplies needed

What You Say:

“Lord, thank You for the amazing gift of Your Son. Help us trust You and understand that nothing we could ever sacrifice to obey You compares to the wonderful and eternal life available in Jesus. Amen.”

5 Minutes HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage your kids to tell their parents about our Big Picture Question: **What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him. Encourage families to pick up the Family Study Guide online or on the slat wall.**