

Lesson #66: The Cost of Following Jesus

Mark 8:31-38

Youtube Link: <https://youtu.be/gLDUG5AAjhQ>

Children's Bible Story Video: <https://youtu.be/rTV3NoOrDEg>

Worship Theme: Commit to follow Jesus.

Memory Verse: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." (Mark 8:34b)

Songs (Youtube links):

1. I Have Decided <https://youtu.be/MR1Yv--Q4oo>
2. I Will Follow Jesus <https://youtu.be/aasilZXGorc>
3. It's a Great Day <https://youtu.be/Z91SULEHfho>

Pray

Song: Select songs from the list above.

Icebreaker: Piggy-back Running Race



1. Divide the children into 2 groups and have them stand in line with a partner.
2. This is a piggy-back running race, so the partners need to decide who will be carried.
3. When the teacher shouts "run," the children need to run to the finish line with their partner on their back. The first pair to reach the finish line will win a point.
4. Once the first set of group reaches the finish line, the teacher will let the next group run.
5. The group who gets the most points will win the game.

Introduction:



Prepare a heavy bag, and let the children carry that bag around the classroom. Ask the children if the bag was heavy for them.

There is a man who carried a heavy cross for all of us. He is Jesus. Did He do any bad things? (No!) Jesus did not deserve to die on the cross, but he did it because of his great love for us and in obedience to God the Father. Today, we will learn about Jesus telling His disciples about God's plan for him. He is also going to tell us something very important about following him.

Bible Story:

Jesus had been performing many miracles! The disciples now knew that He was the Messiah. The Messiah is the one who was sent from God to save his people. Peter, one of the twelve disciples, had just declared that he believed Jesus was the Messiah. Now Jesus had something very important to teach them about God's plan for the Messiah.

Mark 8:31 says, "He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again." Jesus told them *exactly* what was going to happen to him. This was not what the disciples expected to hear about Jesus! They believed the Messiah would be more like a king and rule over everyone right away.

Peter believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but when Jesus told them that He must suffer and die, Peter rebuked Him! This means Peter scolded Jesus for saying

something that was wrong. But Jesus immediately rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me Satan! For you are not thinking of the things of God, but of the things of man!”

Then Jesus explained to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?” (Mark 8:34-36)

Following Jesus *is not easy*. It means not giving into our sin but living like Jesus lived. It means doing what God wants us to do even when it is hard. It means *not thinking about ourselves* but thinking about others. It is hard, just like carrying a cross. Jesus carried his cross and gave his life for us. Jesus wants us to give our whole lives to him, to live for him and not ourselves, no matter how hard it is for us to do. Even though this sounds hard, Jesus promises to always be with us to guide us and help us! We are never alone to follow Jesus because he is always with us!

Questions to discuss:

1. What did Peter do when Jesus explained he must die and after three days rise again? (Peter rebuked him)
2. What did Jesus say people must do in order to be his disciples? (deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Jesus)
3. Why is following Jesus hard? (it means we have to obey God and not be sinful)
4. Who carried the cross for us? (Jesus)
5. What makes it easy for us to carry the cross? (Jesus will be with us to help us)

Game:

Materials Needed: paper (5 sheets) and small rocks

1. Tape the paper in a shape of the cross on the ground.
2. Divide the children into 2 groups and have them line up 5 steps behind the cross.
3. Give a small rock to each team and have them throw it on to the cross. If it falls on the cross, they receive a point. If it falls outside, they don't get any points.
4. Before each child throws the rock, have them say, “I will follow Jesus!”



Memory Verse:

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:34)

Craft: Make Your Own Cross

Materials Needed: Color papers, glue



1. Give different color papers to children and ask them to tear it into little pieces to glue on to the bigger paper in the shape of a cross.
2. Explain to the children that Jesus carried the heavy cross so that we do not have to die because of our sins. We must give thanks to God and commit to follow him.

Song: Select songs from the list above

Pray

Teacher's Devotion (Please read before you get ready to teach the students.)

It is hard to commit to follow someone whom you cannot trust. Commitment is a promise to do something even when things are difficult. We need to remember that Jesus was committed to saving us, and he did not change his mind even when things were difficult for him - even dying on the cross. Because Jesus died for us, we can trust Jesus. We know that there is nothing Jesus won't do for us because he loves us. Today, let us make a commitment to follow Jesus all the days of our lives.

