

THE WORD BECAME FLESH



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#22 - The Call to Follow Jesus Luke 9:46-50, 57-62, 10:1-24

PICTURES (Note: Inserted in brackets at the appropriate place in the lesson is the number of the picture to show the students.)

- 22-1 Jesus and the children
- 22-2 Jesus teaching the disciples

REVIEW (Before teaching lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review) What happened to Jesus when he was transfigured? Who was there with him? What did God the Father say about his Son?
- **Big Question Review:** How does God reveal his glory? Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** John 17:1b-3 God's glory is revealed through the gift of his Son.

("Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.) ³ Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

LESSON CONTENT

Note: The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

One of our biggest problems is thinking too highly of ourselves. We often think of ourselves as being smarter than God. What is evidence that we often think of ourselves as being smarter than God? Every time we disobey God and do what we want instead of what God says is right to do, we are saying we are smarter than God. The disciples suffered from this problem, too, and in this lesson we will see what Jesus teaches them.

Luke 9:46-48 (picture 22-1)

⁴⁶An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. ⁴⁷Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. ⁴⁸Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest."

What was the disciples' argument about? Which of them would be the greatest.

What had Jesus been teaching them by the example of his life? To live humbly, love others and be a servant. Not seek to elevate oneself.

What does it mean that the person who welcomes a little child in Jesus' name welcomes Jesus? To welcome a child, the motive is love, not gaining recognition or honor for oneself. Children don't have social standing, honor or power to bestow on someone else.

What does it mean that he who is least among you is the greatest? Whoever is humble and serves others is greater in God's eyes than the person who has power and honor in the eyes of the world.

John then questioned Jesus about something else.

Luke 9:49-50 (picture 22-2)

⁴⁹"Master," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us."

⁵⁰"Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you."

Why did the disciples try to stop the man from driving out demons? Because he wasn't one of the group following Jesus. They probably thought of themselves as being a special group because they were with Jesus and they didn't want others to infringe on what they had and were able to do.

What did Jesus mean when he said "whoever is not against you is for you"? If people aren't opposing the work done in Jesus' name, then they are supporting it.

THIS RED SECTION CAN BE SKIPPED FOR LEVEL 3

Many people say that they want to follow Jesus but by his teaching Jesus was letting his followers know that it wasn't easy to follow him.

Luke 9:57-62

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

⁵⁸Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." ⁵⁹He said to another man, "Follow me."

But the man 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 good-bye to my family."

⁶²Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."? The man needed to count the cost of following Jesus as he wouldn't have a home or place to live. It wasn't going to be easy.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."? The man wanted to wait until his father had died to follow Jesus. Jesus was saying to let the spiritually dead fill the responsibility of taking care of and burying the physically dead. Proclaiming the gospel was more urgent; it had eternal impact.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."? You can't be looking back to the things of the world to be useful to God. To plow you have to keep your eyes ahead on where you're going, not behind on where you've been, or what you've done already.

Jesus then sent the disciples out to share and he gave them instructions as to what they were to do.

Luke 10:1-7

¹After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ²He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. ³Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

⁵"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' ⁶If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."? There are lots of people who would be open to hearing the gospel, but there are very few who are out

there sharing it. It is a matter of praying and asking God to raise up those who are needed to go and share.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves"? There would be people out there who would oppose their work and try to destroy them as a wolf would a sheep.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Do not take a purse or bag or sandals"? Don't be burdened down by material possessions. Trust God to provide for your needs.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Do not greet anyone on the road"? Don't be caught up in endless and pointless socializing when the message is urgent. Get the important business done.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house"? If it is a place where you are welcomed be content with provision that is given to you, don't seek something more. Don't try to improve your physical living conditions. Comfort isn't the focus, sharing the good news about Jesus with people is.

Luke 10:8-16 (Level 3 starts again.)

⁸"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. ⁹Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' ¹⁰But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ¹¹'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' ¹²I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

¹³"Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

¹⁶"He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

If a town welcomed them what were they to do'? Stay where people want to hear the message, take care of their physical needs (heal them) and preach the truth about who Jesus is.

If a town did not receive them what were they to do? Warn them of the destruction that would come on them. Entire towns were to be rejected if the people rejected them. This demonstrates the influence that where we live and who we choose to associate with has on us.

What does Jesus mean when he says, He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me? The disciples were Jesus' representatives. If a person accepts the representative, he accepts the one who sent him. Christ is the representative of the Father.

Luke 10:17-24

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

¹⁸He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

²¹At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

²²"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

²³Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. ²⁴For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

What power was given the disciples? They had the power to overcome Satan and things that would harm them.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."? They should not get caught up in the power to do things on earth, but recognize that the eternal, the kingdom of God, is what has value.

Why did Jesus want them to focus on the eternal rather than on the power given them on earth? It would be easy to get puffed up and lose perspective of the purpose to which they had been called. Having power on earth can cause a person to lose an eternal perspective.

Why is God's truth revealed to little children rather than the wise and learned? The wise and learned think they are so smart that they can figure it all out for themselves in their way. They try to make truth fit their own ideas or agenda. Little children accept things as they are. They believe what is told to them.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him"? The Father and Son are one. They know each other. To know the Father, you have to accept the Son. Jesus reveals himself to those who are open to receiving him.

What is it that the disciples saw and heard that the prophets could only hope for? The prophets were waiting for the Messiah. The disciples were there with the one the prophets had been waiting for.

Jesus was emphasizing to his followers that they needed to make sharing the good news of the kingdom of God their top priority. He promised to give them power to do this and they needed to keep their focus on what they were called to do.

What are all of us as believers called to do in terms of other people? All of us as believers are called to be representatives of Christ and share with others the good news of Jesus. We have to remember that the things of this world are all temporary and it is the truth of God that will last forever. The greatest among us will be the ones who are truly humble and give up the things of the world to serve Jesus more fully.

Remember that Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest."

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** Who is greatest in the eyes of God? When the disciples went out to share the gospel what were they to do? How do we come to know the Father?
- **Thought Questions:** Would the things Jesus said encourage or discourage people from following him? Why do you think Jesus said things that might discourage people from following him? To follow Jesus why do we have to commit ourselves fully to him?
- **Prayer:** Thank Jesus that he is worthy of all your devotion. Pray that you would want to be his servant and be devoted to doing his work in the world. Pray that you would not let the things of the world take your eyes off the eternal and keep you from following Jesus.
- **The Big Question: Who is the greatest in the kingdom of God?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse: Luke 9:48**
The most humble servant is the greatest in the kingdom of God.

"Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest."

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: Jesus says that the person who is the least will be the greatest in the kingdom of God.

1. When we welcome little children in Jesus' name we welcome the God who sent him.
2. To follow Jesus, we need to recognize that we are not to hold onto the things of the world but rather focus on what has eternal value.
3. Jesus gives his followers the power to do his work and overcome the enemy.

Why do I need to know this? I can't pursue worldly recognition and Jesus at the same time. My heart needs to be devoted to Jesus and sharing the good news.

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the booklet and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse in the inside.

- ★ **Activity Page:** Fill in the blanks

Instructions: Fill in the blanks of some of the things Jesus said to his followers.

The least among you is the greatest.

The Son of Man has no place to lay his head.

Let the dead bury their own dead.

No one who looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.

The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.

Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me.

- ★ **Further Understanding:** Bible Study Skills

Instructions:

1. Read the whole passage below to the students as they read along in their Bibles or on the discussion notes.
2. Read the passage verse by verse and have the students explain each verse.
3. Have the students extract one important truth from the passage. This can be done as an entire class or you can break into pairs or small groups.
4. Have the students answer the additional two questions: How can you apply this truth in your life? What will be the result of applying that truth?

John 13:1-17 Jesus demonstrates our calling.

13 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

² The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

¹⁰ Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Questions: What demonstrated the full extent of Jesus' love? How did washing the disciples' feet demonstrate his love? Why were the disciples to do what Jesus did?

JOURNAL

The daily journal inside the booklet has six readings that relate to a theme. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Journal Focus: What has Jesus called us to?

Reading 1: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17 We have been called to be saved. How have we been called? What is the result of that calling?

Reading 2: 1 Peter 2:9-12 We have been called out of darkness into light. What does it mean that we have been called out of darkness into light?

Reading 3: 1 Timothy 6:11-16 We are called into eternal life. What does being called into eternal life mean we do?

Reading 4: Galatians 5:13-18 We are called to be free. What is the freedom we are called to in Jesus? How do we live in freedom?

Reading 5: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 We are called to live a holy life. How are we to called to live a holy life?

Reading 6: 1 Peter 1:13-16 We are called to be holy. What does it mean to be holy? Why are we to be holy?