

Study Series: Follow Me

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 Lesson Title: “Unconverted Believers” (pp. 101-114)

Session 8

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The main point of this lesson is: Being a Christian means more than believing in Jesus; it requires following Him.

Focus on this goal: To help adults identify evidences in their lives that they do or do not follow Jesus

Key Bible Passage: Matthew 4:19; 7:13-14,21-23

Before the Session

Create a poster to display throughout this entire study with: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:19 (ESV)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Guide the group to identify phrases common in contemporary Christianity. Use the study introduction (p. 100) to explain what the author wants to do in this study with those phrases.

Note Session 8 challenges common phrases such as, “I believe in Jesus” and “I asked Jesus into my heart.” Read the main point of this lesson statement for Session 1 (p. 112).

Read the last paragraph of the introduction (p. 100).

Step 2. Imagine a Woman Named Ayan

Use the first three paragraphs of Day One (p. 101) to relate the scenario with Ayan, and the first option. Discuss Day One, activity 1 (p. 101).

Determine the second option to answering Ayan’s question “How do I become a Christian?” Ask: Why would anyone answer the call to die? Declare we’ve got to wholeheartedly believe that Jesus is worth it, and that dying to self is the only way to truly live. State that’s what Ayan chose to do, and that’s what the first disciples chose to do.

Draw attention to the Matthew 4:19 poster and evaluate what Jesus was asking those fishermen to do. Discuss Day One, activity 2 (p. 102). State it was to those very disciples Jesus repeated the call in Luke 9:23-25 (activity 1). Invite a volunteer to read Matthew 16:24-26. Relate what happened to these four disciples (p. 102).

Invite a volunteer to read the Day One Note (p. 102). Read and discuss the final paragraph of Day One (p. 102).

Step 3. Pray This Prayer

Relate John’s experience from Day Two (p. 103). Read the italicized common deceptive phrases John’s story represents (p. 103). Discuss the author’s question (p. 103): “Should it alarm us that the Bible never mentions such a prayer?” Ask: Why have we replaced challenging words from Christ with trite phrases?

Discuss Day Two, activity 1 (p. 103). Explain Jesus is not calling us to hate anyone; rather He’s saying the call to follow Him should take precedence over every other relationship; His followers must love Him more than anything else in life.

Evaluate the difference between praying a prayer to ask Jesus into our heart and counting the cost of following Jesus.

State that Jesus’s famous Sermon on the Mount describes the kingdom life of His disciples. He concluded that sermon with some sobering words. Invite a volunteer to read Matthew 7:21-23. Ask: Why are these frightening words? Why are they necessary words?

Request adults silently consider Day Two, activity 2 (p. 104-105).

Step 4. The Hard Road

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 7:13-14. Analyze how the wide road can be a religious road. Determine why the road that leads to life is hard. Consider why anyone would choose that road.

Read and discuss the Day Three Note (p. 106). Guide the group to determine how to reconcile passages about dying to follow Jesus with other passages (such as Nicodemus, the Philippian jailer, and Romans) that seem to state salvation just requires belief.

Discuss Day Three, activity 2 (p.107). Emphasize James was not saying we earn salvation by good, religious works; he was saying mere intellectual assent about the gospel and believing the stories about Jesus isn’t sufficient for salvation, it certainly doesn’t do demons any good. Genuine works flow out of a genuine faith that has died to self in order to live in Jesus.

Step 5. A Changed Life, Part 1

Request a volunteer read the Day Four Note (p. 107). Ask: What must be true about people who claim to be Christians but don’t look different from the rest of the world?

Invite responses to Day Four, activity 1 (p. 108). State that 2 Corinthians 4 goes on to acknowledge the Christian life is hard, but worth it. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-11,16-18.

Request adults examine Matthew 4:17 and state the one word that summarizes Jesus’s call to follow Him. Examine the meaning of repentance, using remarks in Day Four (p. 108-109) to add to the discussion.

Discuss Day Four, activity 2 (p. 109).

Step 6. A Changed Life, Part 2

Explore what repentance might look like in a predominantly Christian setting. Read the second paragraph of Day Five (p. 110), beginning with “For every Christian in every culture . . ..” Explore what begins to happen when we die to self and Christ lives in us.

Discuss Day Five, activity 1 (pp. 110-111).

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Note the purpose of this lesson is not to scare true believers into doubting their salvation, but to pull away the veil of deception Satan has pulled over many eyes with an easy Christianity.

Request adults prayerfully consider Day Five, activity 2 (p. 111). Urge them to speak with you after the session if they have questions or concerns.

Close in prayer.

