

# THE LIFE

EMBRACING THE LIFE OF A CHRIST-FOLLOWER

PART 2: THE PICTURE OF A DISCIPLE  
UNIT 4: A DISCIPLE ENGAGES WITH  
HIS OR HER SURROUNDINGS  
LESSON 33: HOW WE ENGAGE WITH  
THE WORLD MATTERS

**What we want students to learn:** That as Christ-followers, the way in which they live and serve matters.

**What we want students to do with what they've learned:** To consider what their day-to-day lives communicates to the world around them about their faith, and about God in general.

**Scripture Focus:** 1 Peter 2:11-17

**Supporting Scripture:** Matthew 5:16

**Overview:** Though service is at the heart of the call to engage with our surroundings, it goes much farther than just a mission trip or a service project. Maybe the most profound way for your students to make a difference in their world is to set godly examples in their everyday, seemingly mundane, day-to-day interactions with others. Jesus mentioned this when He commanded His followers to be salt and light. Peter expounded on this in greater depth in 1 Peter 2. You're going to have the chance to challenge your students to see their lives as powerful tools to bring glory and honor to God. It's a powerful way of viewing the call to engage with the world around them in the name of Jesus.

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## TEACHER PREP VIDEO

Each **LIFE** lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your **LIFE** lesson 33 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 33, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

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## BIBLE BACKGROUND

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details gives you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know **who** wrote the book, **when** it was written, and **why** it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

## THE DETAILS

- **Author:** 1 Peter was written by Peter, one of Jesus' most trusted disciples and one of the key leaders of the growing movement of Christ-followers.
- **Time frame:** 1 Peter was likely written between 54-68 AD.
- **Purpose:** 1 Peter was written to a people under persecution, likely under the reign of Nero. Peter calls the

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Church to persevere under trials because eternal life awaits them. He encourages them that God's promises to His people will endure and should be the basis of their hope.

## THE SETTING

Peter wrote this epistle that was distributed to churches over a wide geographical area because he wanted to remind them that although they were living in tough times, they were not forgotten by the apostles and more importantly, the Lord. These provinces under Roman rule were full of sin and debauchery. Much like today, the church needed wisdom on how to operate in a world increasingly hostile toward the Gospel. Christians were being persecuted, even to the point of death as Hebrews 11 mentions, so Peter exhorted them to demonstrate perseverance even in the midst of heavy affliction.

## THE MAIN POINT

The main point that Peter brings home in this passage is that we are citizens of a different Kingdom. We are passing through this side of eternity for only a brief moment. The way we conduct our lives, including the words we speak and the actions we model, matter because they speak volumes of who God is to an unbelieving world. Peter warned us that although we used to be like the Gentiles chasing our selfish desires, we are now set free from the bondage and sin that once entrapped us. The freedom that Christ has given us motivates us to go into the world to exemplify the grace of God and to share the rich news of the Gospel. Peter seemed to be shouting with a megaphone, "Live every day of your life to the glory of God!"

## LESSON PLAN

The *Lesson Plan* contains three elements: An introductory activity called **The Lead In**; the Bible study section called **The Main Event**; an application-focused segment called **The Last Word**.

## THE LEAD IN

- **Goal:** To help students understand that living a life close to Jesus takes work just like any relationship.
- **Set-Up:** The necessary technology to preview and show the following YouTube video:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N3MjUmSeJw>

FIRST, ask students this question:

- **Who is the best player in the NBA?**
  - Answers will vary. Some likely answers will include LeBron James, Steph Curry, Kevin Durant, and maybe James Harden or Kawhi Leonard. The goal here is to provoke them to discussion and even some disagreement on who might be the best. Feel free to chip in with your opinion.
- **What do all of these players have in common?**
  - Answers will vary. They might talk about how they are all incredible shooters, beasts at rebounding, or crafty at dribbling the basketball. However, that's not what the ultimate common denominator is.

NEXT, say something like this:

- **The common factor among all great athletes or anyone at the top of their field is a solid work ethic. All of those basketball players we just talked about have a natural athletic ability, but it's their work ethic that got them to the top and has kept them there. Let's watch a video to demonstrate what I'm talking about.**

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THEN, show the video about Steph Curry's work ethic. The video is five minutes long so you may not want show the full video. 2:29 is a great stopping point if you choose to only show part of it. Once the group has watched the video, say something like this:

- **Curry's work ethic is what made him into the star he is today. The reason you go to practices, recitals, or weight-training classes is so that you can develop your body and skill level to become better at your activity!**

FINALLY, ask something like:

- **Are there similarities between this type of work ethic and our walk with Jesus? If so, what are they? What are the differences?**
  - Answers will vary. On one hand, the Christian life isn't about our works or effort. We can't work our way to God or earn His favor and love. On the other hand, we can't expect to be close with God if we never spend time with Him. We can't expect Him to move in our lives if we are not walking in obedience to His commandments. We must put forth effort in cultivating our relationship and walk with Christ. So, the question becomes: How bad do we want to walk closely with the Lord? And what are we willing to do for that? We have to remember that we aren't working for grace, rather we are working from grace and what Christ has done for us. Once we begin to lock into this idea, it changes how we treat our relationship with the Lord and how we live our lives.

Transition into *The Main Event* portion of the lesson.

## THE MAIN EVENT

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- **Goal:** To help students see that as Christ-followers, the way in which they live and serve matters.
- **Set Up:** Make sure students have a Bible or that they are able to look along with a friend.

FIRST, read or have a student read 1 Peter 2:11-16. Give some context for the passage using the Bible Background. When students have finished, lead them in a short discussion. Instruct them to look back at verse 11-12. Ask something like:

- **What do you think it means to be a sojourner or exile?**
  - Answers will vary. It means that you are separated from your homeland. There is a sense that you are not where you should be or in a place that brings you comfort.
- **Have any of you ever been in a country that did not speak English? What was that like? Or if you haven't, what do you imagine it would be like?**
  - Answers will vary. It's probably a little scary. The odds are that you probably felt helpless trying to communicate with the locals. You may have even tried some food that you will never put back in your mouth. The culture was so different because you were a sojourner in their land. It had a completely different feel from home.
- **What is Peter communicating to us in calling us sojourners and exiles?**
  - Answer: He's telling us that this earthly life is only temporary and will fade away. We were made for perfect relationship with God. As C.S. Lewis puts it, "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." Our true home is found in heaven in the presence of God.

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NEXT, take a minute to dwell on the words that Jesus spoke in John 17:14-15, to be in the world, but not of the world. When we grasp what Jesus teaches here, it revolutionizes the way that we interact with a lost world. We don't judge them or seclude ourselves from them. Rather we act as salt and light! Ask something like:

- **At the end of vs. 11 Peter tells us to abstain from fleshly passions? Why should we do that?**
  - Answer: Fleshly passions are always the gateway to sin. They are not in accordance with God's character and must therefore be squashed. Sin's grip only grows stronger the more we give in to them.

THEN, say/ask something like this:

- **You'll notice that Peter gives a prohibitive command in vs. 11 to abstain from ungodly passions. But then he gives us a directive command in verse 12 to speak and act honorably among the Gentiles. Why is it important to not only be known for what we're against, but to also be known for what we are for?**
  - Answer: When we tell someone that we're against profanity, sexual immorality, and so on, those are good things to be against. But they don't necessarily draw people closer to the Gospel. It's when we combine our convictions with actions and words that proclaim the Gospel that we are able to have a powerful witness.
- **What does verse 12 tell us will happen when we live sold out for Christ?**
  - Answer: Others will see our actions and glorify God.
- **Why is God's glory our concern?**
  - Answer: Because it was for His glory that we were created. When we try to steal His glory for ourselves, we elevate ourselves to a god-like status, which will always come crashing down on us.
- **What kind of devotion does the Gospel call us too?**
  - Answer: It calls us to a radical, constant devotion to the Lord. It's easy to fall into a place of half-hearted devotion to the Lord where we bargain with Him on how much of our lives we are willing to give Him. When we do this, others take note and aren't convinced that Jesus is worth the sacrifice. In other words, there are no off days in Christianity. Our lives are a theater to the world telling the story of who we believe God is.

NEXT, turn their attention to verses 15-17. Say something like this:

- **Verse 15 starts out by saying, "this is the will of God." Many of us chalk the will of God up to only having to do with things like which college we will go to or the person we will marry. We look for the mysterious, unrevealed things, but there is a will that God has made explicit to us. Our ears should perk up when we hear this and we should be eager to carry out whatever it is that He has made known. So, what is this revealed will? It is that people would look at your life and be silenced by the nobility of it because they know that God is the one working in you.**

THEN, ask something like:

- **How does this fight the idea that our faith is private?**
  - Answer: It calls us to live in such a way that it impacts the perceptions of those who don't agree with our faith. That means that we pop our insular bubble and commit to loving those who may look or act nothing like us.

NEXT, say something like:

- **Here's a quick illustration we can think of that may help us understand this a little bit better. Many Christians live their lives like they're in the secret service. They want to privately associate with Jesus, but they want to stay away from the public scene as much as possible. Now, being in secret service would be pretty cool, but also think about how lonely it would get! You wouldn't be able to openly talk**

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about your job with anyone. You would have to keep numerous secrets. You're always under the threat of attack. Although we think of it as a glamorous job, it would get pretty burdensome. But, think about if your job was to be an ambassador for the United States. At that point, you are the literal representation of the country. You speak and act on the behalf of its best interests. We are representatives of Christ. That is a huge responsibility, but an even grander privilege. Let us not forget that everyone Jesus called, He called publicly.

THEN, direct their focus to the last two verses and drill down on the idea that Christ is our only true freedom. Ask something like:

- **Verse 16 commands us to live as free people, but to not abuse our freedom. How can the prospect of being freed from Christ and under grace be taken the wrong way?**
  - o Answer: Paul addresses this problem in Romans 6. There were those that were misusing their freedom in order to sin. The freedom that we have been given is meant to overcome sin, not dive deeper into it and ask for forgiveness later. We've experienced freedom from sin, not freedom to sin.
- **At the end of verse 16, he calls us servants of God. Generally speaking, what does it mean to be a servant?**
  - o Answers will vary. Generally speaking, a servant is someone who serves a master.
- **Why is it a privilege and not a burden to be a servant of God?**
  - o Answer: Because it is precisely when we come under the lordship of Christ that we are made free. When He becomes our Master, the chains of this world no longer tie us down.
- **Verse 17 gives us quick, rapid-fire commands in order for our lives to be set apart in holiness. What are some practical ways that we can fear God and love the brotherhood?**
  - o Answers will vary.

FINALLY, read or have a student read Matthew 5:16 and use this verse to reemphasize the value of our obedience to Jesus. You can say something like this after you've read it:

- **How incredible is it that God would use messed up people to be His vessels of ministry upon this earth? He could have chosen so many other different options, but His plan was to use you to impact those in your circle of influence! Remember, there is no clocking out of being a Christian. Others are always watching us, looking to see whether we will persevere faithfully or fall away. You'll never have a greater impact on this planet than when you're walking close to Jesus and striving to make Him known.**

Ask if there are any questions, and if there are none, transition into *The Last Word*.

## THE LAST WORD

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- **Goal:** To challenge to walk in such a way that brings others closer to the Kingdom.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, explain to students that you want to take some time to evaluate where they are in modeling their walk with Christ. Hopefully, as students start to open up and express struggles, you can express some of your own struggles in loving Christ. Don't be afraid to get real with them, but use discernment in what you share. Ask:

- **How would you evaluate your own walk with the Lord? Do you find loving Him easy or a struggle?**
  - o Answers will vary.

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- How would those around you (friends, co-workers, family) describe your devotion to Christ?
  - Answers will vary.
- What are some things that might need to change in your life in order for those around you to see a better picture of what Christ means in your life?
  - Answers will vary.
- We talked about Steph Curry's devotion to developing his skills and shot. How can you become more devoted to developing your relationship with the Lord?
  - Answers will vary. Be sure to have them think about some specific things they can do and disciplines they can develop. But also balance it with explaining that those things aren't ends themselves. It's all about helping us grown in our love and affection for Christ. That is what will make a difference in our lives.
- What are some ways that you can specifically demonstrate the love of Christ to those around you?
  - Answers will vary. Get them to think in terms of specific people.

NEXT, as we wrap up, share this summary of a news story that has made its way across the world. ESPN actually filmed a documentary about this touching story. If you're interested in checking it out, you can find the full thing at [espn.com](http://espn.com) by searching, "Arthur." Say something like:

- A few years ago there was a story that took the news by storm. It was about a dog named Arthur. It all revolved a group of Swedish adventure racers who were racing in Ecuador. If you're unfamiliar, an adventure race is a journey that teams take that lasts hundreds of miles and includes hiking, climbing, cycling, and kayaking. It's an incredibly intense sport that requires an insane amount of endurance and self-discipline. Along the way, early in the journey, the Swedish team checked in at a rest stop and there was an emaciated, scraggly looking mutt that was hanging around. One of the team members decided to feed him a meatball and after that, the dog would not leave his side. As they started to run through the mountainous terrain, the dog was right there with them. The team was astounded at the dog's ability to keep with the team. Even though he was beat up and badly in need of medical attention, he kept persevering with the group. At one point the team was told by a race marshal that they had to leave the dog as they boarded their kayaks. As they pushed off land, leaving the dog behind, the dog jumped into the river swimming after them. It was a touching moment of the dog's commitment to not leave his new friends' side. The team pulled him into the kayak and decided they would face whatever penalty they had to, but they were not going to leave Arthur (named by the team after King Arthur) because he had become a part of their team. They pulled the race off, and it ended with the team captain flying the pup all the way back to Sweden. Arthur's story and his determination and grit went viral and now millions of people have been inspired by the dog.

End with connecting this story with our call as a Christian. Explain that when we persevere through tough times and show a consistency in our spiritual life, we never know the impact that we may have on others and how God might use it to bring about repentance and faith.

FINALLY, allow time for any closing thoughts or questions from your students before closing in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're posting them on Instagram, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Use the **Social Media** guide to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).