

THE LIFE

EMBRACING THE LIFE OF A CHRIST-FOLLOWER

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLESHIP
LESSON 5: THE ALL-ENCOMPASSING
DISCIPLESHIP JESUS DESIRES

What we want students to learn: That Jesus expects nothing less than all of us. Nothing but our everything will do.

What we want students to do with what they've learned: To identify any area of their lives they have withheld from God and to consider what it would take to completely surrender this area.

Scripture Focus: Luke 14:25-33

Overview: The purpose of this lesson is to help students understand the brand of discipleship to which Jesus calls us. Jesus doesn't look for a dispassionate, semi-committed follower. Jesus expects our complete devotion. This lesson will help students understand that nothing should come between Jesus and them.

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 5 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 5, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

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:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian, and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around A.D. 60.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

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THE SETTING

Jesus' earthly ministry was coming to a close, and He was on His way to Jerusalem for the final time. While on the way, He continued to heal and teach about the Kingdom of God. Great crowds were following Jesus, and He used the opportunity to teach about true discipleship.

THE MAIN POINT

Jesus desires all-encompassing discipleship. A true follower of Jesus will put Him above every other person or thing in their life. He must come before our family members, our comfort, everything we own, and even our very lives.

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 get students thinking about the importance of preparation and counting the cost.
- **Set-Up:** Gather two pieces of blank paper and two pens to use in the following activity. Optional: a small piece of candy to award each member of the winning team.

FIRST, divide students into two teams. Explain that you will be giving each team the same scenario. They will have three minutes to come up with a list of everything they will need for the scenario (Examples: plane tickets, clothing, sunscreen, and so on). At the end of the two minutes you will compare the lists, and the team with the best preparation will win.

THEN, say something like:

- **Here is your scenario:** You will be taking a week-long trip to Hawaii with a friend. You will spend time visiting beaches, looking at the beautiful scenery, and hiking through nature. As a team, come up with everything you will need for this trip. Assume that you will not be able to buy anything there other than food. Go!

After you have given the teams two minutes to come up with their lists, have each team read their list to the whole group. If time permits, discuss as a group some of the items one team included but the other might have left off and why it might be important. Select a winner based on which team you think was the most prepared for the one-week trip to Hawaii.

NEXT, ask something like:

- **Why is preparation so important when you are about to do something like go on a big trip, take a final exam, or run a marathon?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **How does knowing exactly what to expect help you prepare for something?**

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- o Answer: If you know exactly what's coming, you can make the necessary preparations ahead of time. Nothing will catch you off guard.

THEN, transition to *The Main Event* by saying something like:

- **In our lesson today we are going to talk about what it means to truly follow Jesus. We're going to learn that He requires an all-in commitment and that we have to be prepared for exactly what He expects from us. The great thing is that He tells us what to expect.**

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

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help students understand that Jesus expects nothing less than all of us. Nothing but our everything will do.
- **Set-Up:** Make sure each student will have access to a copy of the Bible or can look along with a friend.

FIRST, ask students to turn to Luke 14. As students find Luke, take a moment to provide the context for this passage using information from the Bible Background.

NEXT, read or have a student read Luke 14:25. Ask something like:

- **Before we dive into this passage, we need to know whom Jesus was talking with when He said these things. Looking at the Scripture, to whom was Jesus talking?**
 - o Answer: The great crowds that were following Him.

THEN, say something like:

- **Jesus was really popular at this time in His ministry. He had huge crowds of people following Him. Just when He could have made Himself even more popular, He chose to say some pretty tough stuff.**

NEXT, read or have a student read Luke 14:25-33. Ask something like:

- **Jesus gave three different descriptions of the one He said could not be His disciple. What characteristics does Jesus give of the one who cannot be His disciple?**
 - o Answer: 1) The one who does not hate his own family and his own life. 2) The one who does not bear his own cross and come after Jesus. 3) The one who does not renounce all that he has.
- **In your own words, what is Jesus telling the crowd? What type of disciple is he NOT looking for?**
 - o Answers will vary. Jesus is letting the crowd know that He isn't looking for half-hearted disciples.

THEN, say something like:

- **Wow. That sounds like some pretty harsh stuff. Jesus had great crowds following Him as He journeyed to Jerusalem for the final time. Instead of making them feel good about following Him around, He basically told them that He wasn't looking for half-hearted followers; He was looking for true disciples. He wanted His followers to be all in.**

NEXT, explain that throughout this lesson you will be exploring each of these characteristics of the one who cannot be

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a disciple of Jesus. Tell students that as you move through the lesson you would like for them to consider the connection between the characteristics Jesus mentioned in this passage and how they relate to areas where people tend to withhold their complete devotion to Christ. Ask something like:

- **The first characteristic of a disciple of Jesus is one who hates his family. We know that Jesus also talks about loving others and obeying our parents, so what did He mean here? What does hating your family have to do with being a disciple of Jesus?**
 - Answer: Jesus was talking about allegiance. "Hating" was a term that Jews sometimes used to speak of loving less. In a similar teaching recorded in Matthew 10:37, Jesus said that His disciples must love Him more than their family. In short, our love and devotion to Jesus has to be far greater than our love and devotion to anyone else.
- **Why do you think we struggle so much to put Jesus above our relationships with other people?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **What do you think it looks like to put Jesus above your other relationships (family, friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, etc.)? How do you think putting Jesus above those relationships would impact the relationship?**
 - Answers will vary.

THEN, remind students that Jesus must be more important to us than family members, best friends, or a boyfriend or girlfriend. Obedience to Him is not optional for the true disciple. He wants our complete devotion. Jesus promises that those who have put Him before their family will be blessed and will inherit eternal life (Matt. 19:29). Ask something like:

- **In verse 26 of our passage, Jesus said if you do not hate your own life you cannot be His disciple. What did He mean by that? What does it look like to hate your own life?**
 - Answers will vary. Remind students of the discussion you had in the last lesson about denying yourself.

NEXT, say something like:

- **Hating your own life is saying that you want nothing to do with your life apart from Jesus. There is nothing in all of your life that is more important to you than Jesus. This means letting go of the control over your own life and giving that control to God—to completely give up your own plans and desires to follow God's plans and desires for you. This is realizing that it really isn't "your" life at all, but that you actually belong to God, and it is His story being played out in you. Jesus made it clear that if you want to truly follow Him, you have to stop thinking of yourself first.**

THEN, ask something like:

- **As if all of this wasn't shocking enough, Jesus then said that whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Him cannot be His disciple. Remember, Jesus had not died on the cross yet, so what did He mean by that? How do we take up our cross?**
 - Answer: No one takes up a cross to go to a party. You take up your cross to go and die. Taking up one's cross is a metaphor for dying to self and following Jesus.

Explain to students that Jesus calls His disciples to a deep relationship that includes suffering and death. We must die to ourselves if we are going to be the type of disciple that Jesus expects. Say something like:

- **This means that we no longer live to please ourselves or let sin rule over us. We live to please Christ and let His Word rule over our thoughts and actions. Complete surrender to Jesus means surrendering our pleasures and comfort.**

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THEN, ask something like:

- **As Jesus was describing a true disciple, He gave two examples when someone would sit down and think ahead before doing something. What are some things that you would never try to do without first having a plan in place or thinking about what it was going to cost you?**
 - Answers will vary. Examples may include: picking out a brand-new vehicle without thinking about what it would cost you, getting into a plane to go skydiving without any instructions or even a parachute, or trying out for a team without thinking about how much time and effort is required.

Explain that Jesus used these examples to point out that there is a cost for following Him. He was saying that just as you seriously think through all of the major decisions of your life and weigh whether or not they are worth it, you must count the cost of following Him. Each person should consider what it is going to cost to follow Jesus and be prepared to pay that cost. Ask something like:

- **What might it cost you to be an all-in follower of Jesus?**
 - Answers will vary. Some examples could include popularity and certain relationships. It will cost sin that we enjoy. It can cost us where we put our focus, time, and energy.
- **Do you think it would be worth the cost? Why or why not?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **After giving examples of counting the cost, Jesus tells the crowds exactly what it will cost them to be His disciple. What will it cost them to follow Jesus? What must someone do if he or she wants to be His disciple?**
 - Answer: Renounce all that he or she has.
- **In your own words, describe what you think this means. Do we have to totally give away everything we own or does Jesus mean something else here?**
 - Answers will vary. The word "renounce" in this verse means to separate from. If we want to be Christ's disciples, we must be willing to separate ourselves from everything we have in order to follow Him. Nothing should come between Jesus and us.

NEXT, ask something like:

- **What are the dangers of a half-hearted commitment to Christ? From what you studied today, is there such a thing as a half-hearted commitment to Jesus?**
 - Answers will vary. It looks like Jesus is saying that half-hearted commitment is really no commitment at all. Those who are not willing to be fully committed to Christ are not His disciples. This is dangerous because only those who surrender their lives to Jesus will be saved from sin and death.

FINALLY, say something like:

- **God's grace is a free gift. You cannot earn your salvation. Salvation comes by following Jesus in faith. Yes, it is free, but as we have seen today, truly following Jesus will cost you everything. If you are not willing to put Jesus above everything that is important to you, you cannot be His disciple. He demands all of us. It's all or nothing.**

NEXT, ask if there are any questions, and if there are none, transition to *The Last Word* portion of the lesson.

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THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To have students identify any area of their lives they have withheld from God and to consider what it would take to completely surrender this area.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need to print a copy of the "What Are You Withholding?" handout for each student and provide something for them to write with.

FIRST, distribute materials to each student as described in the set-up. Direct students to read through the list of areas where they might be withholding from God. Next to each area, students should jot down a specific way they are withholding from God, if it applies. Some students may need to identify an entire area in which they are not giving God their all.

NEXT, encourage students to consider what it would take to completely surrender this area to God.

THEN, ask students to flip their page over and write a short prayer or promise to God detailing how they will surrender this area to Him. Encourage students to keep this sheet in their Bible and look at it this week as a reminder.

FINALLY, remind students that Jesus expects nothing less than all of us. Nothing but our everything will do when it comes to truly following Jesus.

Close 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.

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.