The Gospels - Following Jesus

Diocese-Based Leadership Training Program
Mennonite Churches of East Africa (KMC/KMT)

Prepared by
Joseph & Gloria Bontrager
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Lesson 1: Jesus Calls Disciples. Mark 1, 2, 3; Luke 5, 6; John 1

1. What did Jesus do in each of the following stories?

“Disciple” means “follower” – one who follows and learns from his leader.

“Apostle” means “one who is sent” by his leader to do a special task.

2. When Jesus called the 12 disciples, he called them “apostles” (Mark 3:14). The word “apostle” means “one who is sent.” What authority did Jesus give them?

3. Jesus called the disciples to ministry. How is their ministry similar to the ministry of Jesus?

4. What occupation were Simon, Andrew, James, and John? (Mark 1:16-20). What occupation was Levi, also named Matthew? (Mark 2:14; Matthew 9:9)

5. Why did Jesus choose disciples who were so different from each other?

6. Read John 1:35-51. Who introduced Peter to Jesus? What can we learn from the story of Nathaniel coming to Jesus?

7. Describe your call to follow Jesus. Did someone introduce you to Jesus?

Lesson 2: Followers of Jesus are Blessed. Matthew 5, 6, 7; Luke 6

1. In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus described people who are blessed (“Blessed are ____.”) Write a list of character qualities that bring blessing.

2. Are there some of these that seem very difficult to practice in today’s world?

3. Jesus said people with these qualities are “salt” and “light” (Matthew 5:13-14).
   a. What does it mean to be “salt”? Give examples.
   b. What does it mean to be “light”? Give examples.

4. Read Mark 7:24-30. Who received a blessing? Which of the “blessed” do you see in this story?

5. Read Luke 16:19-31. Who received a blessing? Which of the “blessed” do you see in this story?

6. Read Luke 18:9-14. Who received a blessing? Which of the “blessed” do you see in this story?

7. How does your church bring light and salt to the world?

8. How would our world be different if Christians would truly live the qualities that bring blessing?
Lesson 3: Followers of Jesus Fulfill the Law.

1. The Jews in Jesus’ time tried to obey the Old Testament laws. What did Jesus say about how he obeys the Law? (Matthew 5:17-20)

2. In Matthew 5:21-49, Jesus gave examples of teachings about the Law, then the true meanings. Write what he said:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verse</th>
<th>You have heard that it has been said...</th>
<th>but I say to you...</th>
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3. What is the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees? What is the righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees? (Matthew 5:20)

4. The Pharisees accused Jesus of breaking the Law. What Law did they accuse Jesus of breaking in each of the following stories? How was Jesus fulfilling the Law?
   a. Matthew 15:1-9 (also Mark 7:1-23)


1. How do hypocrites pray? (Matthew 6:5). Why should we not pray like that?

2. How do the Gentiles pray? (Matthew 6:7). Why should we not pray like that?

   a. Which words express glory to God?
   b. Which words seek God’s will on earth?
   c. Which words ask God to provide our daily needs?
   d. Which words talk about our relationship with others?
   e. Which words ask God’s help against evil?

4. Is there something we should pray about that is not included in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples?

5. What is prayer? How would you describe it to someone who has never experienced it?

6. Faithful Muslims are required to pray 5 times each day. How often should faithful Christians pray?

7. What is something you can do to strengthen your praying?
Lesson 5: Followers of Jesus Build on the Rock.
Matthew 7:12-29; Luke 6:43-49

1. Jesus taught his disciples about the right way to follow him, using examples:
   b. Matthew 7:15. Sheep’s clothing, but wolves in behavior
   d. Matthew 7:21. Those who say “Lord, Lord,” but do not do God’s will
   e. Matthew 7:22-23. Work miracles, but do not know Jesus personally
   f. Matthew 7:24-27. Build on the rock – build on the sand

2. Do you know people who live like any of these examples? Give examples from your life or from your leadership ministry.

3. Read 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. How are these verses similar to the verses we read in Matthew 7? What is the foundation Rock that we build on?

4. 1 Corinthians 3:12 talks about building “with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw.” What are some ways we can build with gold and silver? What are some ways we build with hay and straw? How will we know what material we have used to build? (v.13-15)

5. In your church, what are the temptations that keep people from being faithful followers of Jesus?

6. How does your church help people to be faithful followers of Jesus? Is there something you can do to help people be more faithful?

Lesson 6: Jesus sends his followers.

1. The gospels report 3 times Jesus sent his followers. Read all the verses listed.

2. What ministries did Jesus expect the disciples to do among the people as they were sent? How are they similar to Jesus’ ministry among the people?

3. The Great Commission of Jesus is repeated in Acts 1:8. What important thing is needed as we go into ministry? (also mentioned in Luke 24:49 and John 20:22)

4. Acts 1:8 says we should take the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, ends of the earth. If these are examples, where is your Jerusalem? Judea? Samaria? Ends of the earth?

5. Does the Great Commission apply to us today? What should faithful followers of Jesus do to obey Jesus?
Lesson 7: The Cost of Following Jesus


1. Read the scriptures listed. What is the cost to follow Jesus? Write a list.
2. What did Jesus mean that we must take up our cross and follow him?
3. Do you know someone who has gained the whole world but lost his soul? (Matthew 16:26). Do you want to be like he is? Explain your answer.
4. What did it cost Jesus to come to earth to do God’s will?
5. Why did Peter not agree that Jesus must suffer and die? (Matthew 16:22)
6. The New Testament writers saw suffering as normal for the follower of Jesus. Read these scriptures and explain what they believed about the reason for our suffering, and the result of our suffering for the gospel.
   - Romans 8:17
   - Philippians 1:29
   - Philippians 3:10-11
   - 2 Timothy 1:8
7. Is God asking you to give something up so you can be a better follower of Jesus?
8. Should we expect to suffer today because we follow Jesus?

Lesson 8: What is True Greatness?

3 different discussions about greatness are reported in the gospels:
- A question from James and John. Matthew 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45
- At the Last Supper. Luke 22:24-30

1. How did Jesus describe true greatness? (Mark 9:35)
2. Who did Jesus say is an example of greatness? (Matthew 18:4)
3. In these scriptures, how did Jesus describe greatness among the Gentiles?
4. How did Jesus describe true greatness among his followers?
5. What did Jesus say is the purpose for power and authority? (Matthew 20:25-28)
6. Why do people seek positions of power?
7. Is it wrong to seek positions of power? What are the traps in having a position of power and authority over others?
8. Do you find it difficult to understand serving others as an example of greatness? Describe what Jesus meant when he said true greatness is serving others.
9. Is there anything you should change in your leadership style to better serve your people, not seek greatness for yourself.

Jesus began his ministry by announcing that “the Kingdom of God is at hand” (Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15). The Kingdom of God is God’s rule and authority, not limited by national boundaries, but includes all who accept God’s rule and authority.

1. Where should we look to see the Kingdom of God? (Luke 17:20-21)
2. Other words are used in the New Testament to mean the same. Write these:
   - Matthew 26:28 ____________________________________
   - John 3:3 _________________________________________
   - Ephesians 2:5 ____________________________________
   - Ephesians 2:8 ____________________________________
3. How is God’s Kingdom different from the kingdoms of this world? (John 19:36)
4. What kind of spirit is needed to enter the Kingdom of God? (Mark 10:13-15)

Jesus used parables to explain the Kingdom of God. A parable is an example from everyday life. Read Matthew 13 and Mark 4.

5. At least 6 times in Matthew 13, Jesus said, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like ....” Write a list of things the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to.
6. Why did Jesus use parables in his teaching? (Matthew 13:10-17)
7. What are some things these parables in Matthew 13 and Mark 4 teach us about the Kingdom of God?
8. What does it mean to “seek first God’s Kingdom” (Mathew 6:33)?
9. Is there anything we should do differently to ‘seek first God’s Kingdom’ in our leadership ministry?


1. These stories tell of a man who traveled and entrusted his property to 3 of his servants. Who did the property belong to?
2. In each story, what was the difference between the first 2 servants and the last servant? How was their reward different?
3. What was Jesus trying to teach in these 2 stories?
4. What are some of the gifts God has given us to care for?
5. The following scriptures describe gifts God has entrusted to us.
   - 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 __________________________
   - Colossians 1:24-27 __________________________
   - 1 Peter 4:10-11 ____________________________
6. What is one thing you can do to show good stewardship in your leadership?