

DISCIPLESHIP FOR GODLY LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

ONE ON ONE WITH THE TWELVE

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This study guide can be used by an individual or as a group study in a Bible study group or training class. Permission is granted to make copies for group study as needed.

These lessons will address the need for disciples in the church today. Although Christ was followed by great multitudes, He felt it was important to choose twelve men for discipleship training. Each of those men had individual needs and Jesus did not treat them all the same. He developed them for service in accordance with their own strengths and corrected their weaknesses and deficiencies.

Before they could be trained, they had to consider carefully what it meant to become one of Christ's disciples. The first lesson in this series will be very important. It will explore the requirements of discipleship, the cost of discipleship and the alternative to discipleship. Throughout lesson one the student should examine personal goals, determine desires, and question motives for seeking discipleship.

The plan for each section of this study guide will include the following items.

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

At the end of the lessons, you will find some additional material in the form of Bible games which can be used, The games can be used with students of any age but will be particularly helpful if the sessions involve a group of young people.

LESSON ONE

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

There are four places in Scripture where lists of the twelve disciples occur. Read each of the passages below. Then list the names given in each passage in order.

Matthew 10:2-4

Mark 3:16-19

Luke 6:13-16

Acts 1:13

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

1. Who is mentioned first in all four lists? _____
2. Who is listed last in three of the four lists? _____
3. Who are the first four listed in all four lists?

4. Who are listed first, fifth and ninth in all four lists?

5. Which disciples seem to be referred to by two different names?
 _____ and _____

LESSON ONE

TEACHING OUTLINE

Text: Luke 14:25-35

Thesis: Every believer must carefully consider the choice to become a true disciple of Christ.

I. Every believer must carefully consider the requirements of discipleship. (Luke 14:25-27).

A. The first requirement: Renunciation (Luke 14:25-26).

1. Renunciation of all human ties (14:26a).

a. Human ties must appear as “hate” in comparison to our loyalty to Christ because love of friends and family can make discipleship difficult or even impossible.

b. Illustration: Moshe Dayan’s autobiography tells of a young Israeli on his honeymoon in Africa who heard of the outbreak of hostilities in the Yom Kippur War. Immediately he flew back to Israel, left his new bride with relatives and joined his reserve unit on the front lines. Did he hate his new bride? No, but there was a higher duty at that time.

2. Renunciation of self (14:26b).

a. If there is a conflict between my will and His, my will needs to be trampled underfoot to follow Him.

b. Illustration: Satan told God that Job would quit following God because of self-interest. “All that a man has he will give for his life” (Job 2:4). But Satan was wrong about Job.

B. The second requirement: Separation (Luke 14:27a).

1. What “bear his cross” does not mean! Enduring physical disability, mental trouble, tornadoes, hailstorms, financial loss; these are not the crosses we bear.

2. The cross is an instrument of death, so bearing the cross is the road to death which brings life. To bear the cross of Christ means that we die to sin. Cross references: Gal. 2:20, Rom. 6:6 and 11, I Cor. 15:31.

C. The third requirement: Identification (Luke 14:27b).

1. The true disciple identifies with Christ in his desire to be totally obedient to the Father (Luke 22:42).
2. The true disciples identifies with Christ in the loneliness of rejection by those closest to him (Mark 14:50).
3. The true disciple identifies with Christ in the new life which is now lived by His power (Gal. 2:20).
4. The true disciple identifies with Christ in the persecution which comes because the world hated Him first (John 15:18).
5. The true disciple identifies with Christ by making Christlikeness the goal of his entire life (I John 3:2-3).

II. Every believer must carefully consider the cost of discipleship (Luke 14:28-33).

A. Discipleship costs the commitment to God of everything we possess (Luke 14:28-30).

1. The cost must be considered before the choice is made (14:28).
2. Failure to follow through on your decision will cause the world to mock (14:29-30).
3. Failure is impossible in Christ because He as the Master Builder has already counted the cost and paid it all. We must simply join in His work as His workmen.

B. Discipleship costs the commitment to God of everything we do (Luke 14:31-33).

1. The cost must be considered in light of who we serve (14:31). We seem to fight against impossible odds, but the victory belongs to Christ.
2. The cost must be considered in light of the outcome of the battle (14:32-33). If we fight in our own strength, we might as well surrender before we start. If we are disciples, however, we will forsake our own strength and then the battle is His.

III. Every disciple must carefully consider the alternative to discipleship (Luke 14:34-35).

A. Choosing discipleship will be good for every believer (14:34).

1. "Salt" is the illustration of discipleship and it is "good" because it has a purpose for existing. True discipleship is the way a believer discovers the real purpose for life.
2. "Salt" is also "good" because it has value. True discipleship is the way to live a life of great value.

3. “Salt” is “good” because it is effective. It does what it was meant to do. True discipleship is effective because it accomplishes what God want to do in the life of the believer, that is, to produce Christlikeness.

B. Refusing discipleship will render a person worthless to God (14:35).

1. Without true discipleship there is no purpose in life.
2. Without true discipleship there is no value in life.
3. Without true discipleship there is no effectiveness in life.

CONCLUSION:

Twelve disciples turned the world upside down for Christ. Why does the church today have so little impact on the world? Disciples are needed!

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET

1. Personalizing Scripture: Copy Luke 14:26, substituting proper nouns for the common nouns used in the verse.

2. Consider and pray: Does my love for Christ so far exceed my love for family as to make my love for them seem like hate in comparison?

3. Look through your last three months of personal spending records and divide your expenditures into the following categories by percentage.

- a. Spending to sustain physical life _____%
- b. Spending to enjoy physical life _____%
- c. Spending to sustain spiritual life _____%

4. Consider and pray. How much of my time and how much of what I possess really belongs to God in an obvious fashion?

5. Luke records the “Parable of the Great Supper” (Luke 14:16-24) just prior to Christ’s teaching on discipleship and the “Parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin and Lost Son (Luke 15) immediately after that teaching. How can we personally reconcile God’s invitation to “compel them to come in” (14:23) with His strict warnings to those who “cannot be my disciples” (14:26)?

LESSON TWO

OVERVIEW: THE CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE

Overview: This lesson will focus on the four disciples about whom we know the least from Scripture. Even though the Bible gives little information about them, there are important lessons which can be gained from this study. Christ had reasons for choosing the twelve which should provide instruction concerning how He chooses disciples today. Bartholomew is mentioned only in the four lists of disciples although many believe he is also called Nathaniel. James of Alphaeus, Thaddeus (also called Lebbaeus and Judas the brother of James), and Simon the Zealot are also very obscure in the Gospel records. But they were disciples and Jesus did choose them to be numbered among the Twelve. By considering that decision process we can be encouraged with the fact that God also chooses many today who, though disciples, remain unknown.

Lesson Two will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON TWO

1. Which of the twelve disciples is most often connected with Bartholomew in the lists of disciples (Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:13-16; Acts 1:13)?

2. Who is often associated with Philip in the Gospel of John (John 1:45-51)?

3. Who were the disciples who saw the risen Christ at the sea of Galilee (John 21:1-2)?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Why is it possible that Bartholomew and Nathaniel are two names for the same individual?

5. Matthew refers to one of the twelve as “Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus” (Matt. 10:3). Mark simply calls him _____. Luke uses an entirely different name _____. (Luke 6:16, Acts 1:13).

6. What are the distinguishing descriptions given to the second Simon among the disciples?

_____ (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18)

_____ (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13)

7. What distinguishing description is given to the second James among the disciples?

_____ (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13)

LESSON TWO

TEACHING OUTLINE

Texts: Matt. 10:1-5; Mark 3:13-15; Luke 6:12-13; Acts 1:12-14

Thesis: We should recognize Christ's method for choosing His disciples.

I. He chose His disciples without considering their background. (Matt. 10:1-5)

A. There were no previous qualifications necessary for discipleship.

1. Christ made no demands except "follow me." There were no height or weight requirements; no age restrictions or intelligence tests. They came from various educational and occupational backgrounds, but these were not requirements because in the case of at least four disciples we are not told what those backgrounds included. In the case of at least two of the twelve, Christ included them in spite of a background which would seem to disqualify them. Matthew was a tax collector and hated by his own people. Simon the Zealot was a political rebel, formerly dedicated to overthrowing the Roman government by violence.

2. Christ provided everything necessary to qualify them as disciples.

a. He gave them His power (Matt. 10:1). Divine power was something they could never have achieved on their own. They could not have become disciples without His power.

b. He was prepared to use what they possessed. They had His power, but they were still using their own skills and abilities as well. "In a worldly point of view, they were a very insignificant company indeed, a band of poor illiterate Galilean provincials, utterly devoid of social consequence, not likely to be chosen by one having supreme regard to prudent considerations. Why did Jesus choose such men? They were the best that could be had. Those who deemed themselves better were too proud to become disciples, and thereby they excluded themselves from what all the world now sees to be the high honor of being the chosen princes of the kingdom" (Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*).

B. He chose His disciples with no previous experience necessary.

1. None of them had any such experience so it must not have been necessary. Not one of them had ever cast out an unclean spirit. Not one of them had ever healed sickness and disease. Illustration: If an advertisement had been placed in the *Jerusalem Courier* listing those as requirements along with two years' experience necessary, not one of them would have answered the advertisement.

2. None of them would ever have these experiences without Christ. He was the one who would make their experience possible. Application: We sometimes expect a new believer to have the same spiritual insight as one who has been saved for twenty years, but God doesn't expect that. Disciples are disciples at whatever level of experience they have. Background is not an excuse for not serving God and lack of experience is not an excuse for not serving God.

II. Christ chose the disciples for a specific purpose (Mark 3:13-15).

A. Christ chose them to be "with Him" (Mark 3:14).

1. This is the first purpose given and the first in order of importance. In the Old Testament, time at the altar always preceded service to God. Illustration: Basic training always precedes warfare.

2. Time with Him must come before service if service is to succeed. No one will be greatly used by God until he has spent time with God. John Wesley said, "Why are we not more holy? Why do we not live for eternity and walk with God all the day long? Do we rise at four or five in the morning to be alone with God? Do we recommend and observe the five o'clock hours for prayer at the close of the day? Let us fulfill our ministry."

B. Christ chose them to "send them forth" (Mark 3:14).

1. They were sent forth to preach. They were to communicate the good news of the kingdom. This was not in the sense of formal expository sermons but rather going as witnesses. This was something even uneducated fishermen could do because they were sharing about Christ and they had spent time with Him. They knew Him.

2. They were sent forth to heal. This was a result of the power Christ had given them and its purpose was the authenticate His deity and the message they shared about Him.

3. They were sent forth to cast out devils. This was also based on the power of Christ and not anything they possessed. They could do it only as long as they

depended on His power. So, their purpose in going was to proclaim Christ and to demonstrate his power.

III. Christ chose His disciples prayerfully (Luke 6:12-16).

A. He prayed in a place without distractions. (Luke 6:12).

1. He desired unbroken communion with God concerning this important decision.

Illustration: Remember the desire to be alone with someone you love especially when dating someone from a large family. The desire for unbroken communion with God was habitual with Christ.

2. He later taught the disciples to do the same, to get alone with God.

B. He spent extra time with God before making the decision. He held an all-night prayer vigil. He gave up sleep to spend time with God. Application: How important is the matter of discipleship to you? Are you prepared to make it a matter of prayer? If you are concerned about discipling others, do you ask God to show you the right people in whom you should invest your time?

C. Christ desired as disciples the men God wanted Him to have. Christ was God, and yet He sought to do the will of God. He asked for the wisdom of God although He was Himself omniscient. He followed the leading of the Spirit of God although He was co-equal with the Father and the Spirit. He did not question even the choice of Judas Iscariot because He knew that God's purposes needed to be accomplished.

IV. Christ chose the disciples and placed His confidence in them (Acts 1:12-14).

A. They were Christ's only program for the starting of the church. Illustration: Christ returns to heaven and is asked "what if they fail?" His reply would be, "I have no other plan." (Source unknown).

1. He committed the message of the cross to them.

2. He committed the program of the church to them.

3. He committed the guidance of the Spirit to them.

B. They proved His confidence was not misplaced.

1. They were witnesses to the resurrection.

2. They waited for and depended on the power of the Spirit.

3. They faithfully labored to establish the early church.

CONCLUSION:

How does Christ choose disciples today?

1. He chooses those without experience.
2. He chooses those the Father chooses.

What does Christ expect from disciples today?

1. They are to be “with Him.”
2. They are to be “sent forth” to serve Him.
 - a. As witnesses of the resurrection.
 - b. Through the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Faithful to the body of Christ, the church.

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON TWO

1. Read Matthew 10:1 and list the verbs which describe actions performed by Christ.

2. Now list from the same verse the actions performed by the disciples.

3. Consider and pray: Is there anything I can do for God in my own strength without relying on the power which comes from Christ?

4. Look back over a calendar or personal schedule of your last week and divide that time into the following categories by percentage.

(a) Personal time _____ %

(b) Time with God _____ %

(c) Family time _____ %

(d) Work _____ %

5. Consider and pray: How much of my time is spent simply being “with God?” Do I ever try to serve Him without first of all spending time with Him?

6. Except for the information in the four lists of disciples, the Bible gives us very little biographical information concerning Bartholomew, Thaddeus, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes. Why do you think the Gospel writers chose not to tell us more detail about these four disciples?

LESSON THREE

SIMON PETER

CHARACTER TRAIT: CONSISTENCY

Overview: Inconsistency is easy to spot in others. Several years ago, Henry Ford II was arrested for driving under the influence. In the same edition of the newspaper which recorded that event there was an article concerning a University of Southern California project. This \$75,000 study into the causes and cures of drunken driving was funded by the Ford Foundation.

We expect consistency from our appliances and vehicles. We become unhappy if they don't work right all the time. But how important is consistency when it comes to discipleship?

This lesson will focus on the life of Simon Peter. The very name which Christ gave him indicated stability and firmness, but that was not the character of Peter when he first met Christ. Jesus worked one on one with Peter to develop consistency into his life. He wanted him to be consistent in faith, in daily cleansing, in doctrine, in devotion and in love. Taking a close look at the lessons learned by Peter should help us develop consistent patterns of growth in our own discipleship program.

Lesson Three will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON THREE

1. Who is listed first in all four of the lists of disciples in Scripture? (Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:13-16; Acts 1:13)?

2. Which three disciples were with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1)?

3. Which disciples made the confession, “thou art the Christ, the son of the living God,” (Matt. 16:16)?

4. What would be the result of receiving the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” at that time (Matt. 16:19)?

5. If Acts 2:41 is the fulfillment of Matthew 16, then how were the “keys of the kingdom” used as Christ built His church?

6. Who became part of the foundation of the church according to Ephesians 2:20?

7. Who is the chief cornerstone on whom the church is built? (Eph. 2:20)

8. What were Peter’s next words to Christ immediately after His great confession (Matt 16:23; Mark 8:32)?

9. What did Christ call Peter soon after promising to give him the keys to the kingdom? (Matt. 16:23; Mark 8:33)?

10. What character quality was obviously lacking in Peter?

LESSON THREE

TEACHING OUTLINE

Texts: Luke 22:31-32; Matt. 14:22-32; Matt. 18:21; John 13:6; Matt. 16:16-23; Matt. 26:58-75; John 21:17

Thesis: A disciple of Christ must develop consistency in life!

I. A disciple must become consistent in faith (Matt. 14:22-32).

A. Faith is taking God at His Word.

1. First, Peter questioned His word. “If it is You,” (Matt. 14:28). Christ had just said, “It is I” (vs 27).
2. Next, Peter acted on His word (vs 29). That is faith.
3. Then Peter forgot His word (vs. 30). Jesus had said to “come” and Peter quit coming, he quit obeying. Notice that it doesn’t say he took his eyes off Him.

B. The important thing about faith is its object.

1. Christ heard the cry of faith.
2. Christ rewarded the cry of faith.
3. Christ reprimanded Peter for inconsistent faith, “why did you doubt” (vs. 31).

II. A disciple must become consistent in forgiveness (Mt. 18:21-35).

A. Peter wanted to limit forgiveness, although he was setting what he thought was a very generous limit.

B. Christ wanted him to learn unlimited forgiveness, a divine attribute.

1. Illustrated by the parable of the debts. The king, representing God, forgives the overwhelming debt. The servant, representing man, refuses to forgive the insignificant debt. But the servant/disciple is supposed to become like Christ.
2. Later Peter would take advantage of Christ’s unlimited offer of forgiveness and offer it to others as well (Mark 16:7).

III. A disciple must become consistent in daily cleansing (John 13:2-10).

A. Avoiding the inconsistency of pride.

1. Peter felt the job of washing feet was beneath Christ's dignity, and also beneath his own.

2. Peter refused to serve alongside of Christ because of his pride, yet Christ came to serve and expects His disciples to do the same.

B. Avoiding the inconsistency of partial cleansing.

1. Christ was teaching His disciples that those He had cleansed from the guilt and punishment of sin still needed continual cleansing from the daily defilement of sin.

2. Peter at first didn't even want his feet cleansed and then he wanted to be all cleansed. Spiritual application: At first, he didn't want forgiveness of sins which were affecting his fellowship with Christ. When he realized that would hurt their fellowship, he went to the other extreme and wanted to be saved (totally cleansed) again. He didn't need total cleansing (salvation) which he already had. He needed confession, forgiveness and restoration to fellowship.

IV. A disciple must become consistent in doctrine (Mt. 16:16-23).

A. Peter's great confession (Matt. 16:16).

1. Showed great spiritual insight.
2. Brought the commendation of Christ.
3. Came from divinely given understanding (Vs. 17).

B. Peter's great rebuke (Matt. 16:23).

1. Revealed a lack of spiritual insight.
2. Brought the curse of Christ.
3. Came from human understanding devoid of divine wisdom (vs. 23).

C. Lessons for disciples.

1. The doctrine of the inconsistent disciple will come from within man's mind rather than from the word of God.
2. Consistency in doctrine will only result from divine insight, taught by the Spirit who inspired the word of God.
3. We must hold firmly to the word of God even if it seems to contradict what we would like to believe.

V. A disciple must become consistent in devotion (Mt. 26:58-75; Luke 22:31-34).

A. A strong statement of devotion (Lk. 22:33).

B. A weak act of devotion (Lk. 22:50).

1. Peter slept while Christ prayed.

2. Peter resisted while Christ submitted.

C. Complete loss of devotion (Lk. 22:57-60).

1. Peter refused to identify with Christ.

2. Peter refused to separate from the world.

3. Peter refused to deny himself but instead denied Christ.

D. The lesson of devotion learned. This was perhaps the hardest lesson Peter ever learned but he did learn it. Later he would go to both prison and death for Christ.

VI. A disciple must learn consistency in love (John 21:15-17).

A. Peter is different in this story. He has started to learn the lesson of consistency.

1. He has lost his pride. He doesn't claim divine love, but only a strong devotion.

2. He has lost his self-confidence. He appeals to the insight of Christ rather than his own wisdom, "thou knowest" (vs. 16).

3. He gives a consistent answer to Christ. "I love thee" (vs. 15, 16, 17).

4. He receives a consistent responsibility from Christ (vs. 15, 16, 17).

B. Lessons for disciples.

1. Consistency is incompatible with pride.

2. Consistency will never result from self-confidence.

3. Consistency will result from a genuine love for Christ.

4. Consistency will be demonstrated in the fulfillment of our responsibility to Christ.

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON THREE

1. In the account of Peter walking on the water in Matthew 14:22-36, write out the actual words spoken by Christ during that incident.

2. What part of those words of Christ did Peter doubt?

3. Consider and pray: Do I ever doubt the promises of God? Is there a specific command of Scripture which I find myself disobeying because I just cannot trust God to keep His Word?

4. When you read the parable of the debts in Matthew 18:23-35, with which character in the story do you identify?

5. Consider and pray: Is there someone in my church or family or at my place of work who has done something to me which I refuse to forgive? What do I think God would want me to do?

6. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the events surrounding Peter's great confession in the same order. First, they tell of the confession, then they record how Christ revealed His coming death, and finally they give Christ's instruction concerning _____ (Matt. 16:24-27; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9:23-26). Why do you think that instruction came right after Peter's confession and rebuke?

7. Throughout the entire account of Peter's inconsistent life, the one consistent thing is the person of Jesus Christ. What should that mean to you as you seek to become His disciple?

LESSON FOUR

ANDREW

CHARACTER TRAIT: CONCERN

Overview: This lesson focuses on one of the main responsibilities of a disciple, that of witnessing. Andrew is mentioned twelve times in Scripture. Four of those times his name occurs in the lists of disciples. Six of those times he is identified as Simon Peter's brother. Once his hometown is listed. In each of the references where definite incidents are related concerning Andrew, he is involved in bringing someone to the Lord.

This is particularly characteristic of him in the events recorded in the Gospel of John. Andrew had a great concern for those around him and he realized that their greatest need was Christ Himself. Becoming a disciple and making Jesus Christ the center of our life should produce a desire to introduce others to Him as well.

This lesson will show how Andrew learned concern from Christ, how he put time and effort into developing his own concern for others and how that concern had an impact on those who were around him.

Lesson Four will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON FOUR

1. Andrew is mentioned twelve times in Scripture. Read each of the references. Then fill in the chart concerning what other individuals were present and what was the action of Andrew toward those people, or those people toward him.

Reference	Other Characters	Action
Matt. 4:18	_____	_____
Matt. 10:2	_____	_____
Mark 1:16	_____	_____
Mark 1:29	_____	_____
Mark 3:18	_____	_____
Mark 13:3	_____	_____
Luke 6:14	_____	_____
John 1:40	_____	_____
John 1:44	_____	_____
John 6:8	_____	_____
John 12:22	_____	_____
Acts 1:13	_____	_____

2. Who was responsible for bringing Simon Peter to Christ (John 1:41)?

3. Who did Philip very likely know among the disciples before he came to Christ (John 1:44)?

4. Who did Philip go to for help when some foreigners approached him about meeting Jesus (John 12:22)?

LESSON FOUR

TEACHING OUTLINE

Text: Matthew 4:17-25

Thesis: Every disciple must learn from the Master Fisherman how to become a fisher of men.

I. Disciples must learn this from the Master Fisherman Himself (Matt. 4:17-20).

A. We must learn from Him how to communicate the Gospel (Matt. 4:17).

1. Jesus was a master communicator. He preached. Although He lived a perfect life, that in itself was not enough to draw men to Himself. He challenged them through His communication to change direction in life and to realize that they were sinners in need of the salvation He had come to provide.
2. Andrew learned from Him how to communicate. He told his brother, “We have found the Messiah” (John 1:41).
3. Discipleship means living for Christ but it always involves the communication of the Gospel of Christ.

B. We must learn from Him the compassion of the Gospel (Matt. 4:19).

1. Jesus had compassion on the multitudes. He came to seek and to save those who were lost. He saw the entire world around Him as those who needed to be rescued from sin and death.
2. Andrew learned that genuine compassion results in spiritual concern. The need was not to feed the fish, but to catch the fish. Compassion will result in such activities as caring for the sick and feeding the hungry even in the ministry of Christ, but those activities were always done for the purpose of gaining a hearing for the Good News.

C. We must learn from Him a concern for the whole man (Matt. 4:23-24).

1. Christ demonstrated concern for the whole man.
 - a. Teaching addressed itself to the mind.
 - b. Preaching addressed itself to the spirit.
 - c. Healing addressed itself to the body.
2. Andrew learned to have a concern for the whole man.

- a. A concern for his own mind by learning from Christ (Mark 13:3).
- b. A concern for the spiritual needs of others (John 1:40).
- c. A concern for the physical needs of others (John 6:8).

II. Disciples must be willing to put time and effort into developing concern in order to become fishers of men (Matt. 4:21).

A. Christ used the illustration of fishing knowing that it was a work which involved great time and effort.

- 1. Fishing involves preparing equipment and keeping it repaired.
- 2. Fishing involves financial investment in equipment.
- 3. Fishing involves long hours of dedication to the task.
- 4. Fishing involves perseverance even when discouraged.

B. Andrew learned that being a disciple of Christ in the area of witnessing involved the same commitment.

- 1. Preparing equipment and keeping it repaired. What equipment is needed to fish for men?
 - a. A knowledge of the Gospel. Become a student of the word of God.
 - b. A heart in tune with the compassion of Christ.
 - c. A genuine concern for those around us.
- 2. Financial investment in equipment. What does it cost to be a witness?
 - a. Gasoline and wear and tear on a car to bring others to hear the word.
 - b. Meals as a person opens their home to friendship evangelism.
 - c. Investment in buildings, support for missionaries, books and tracts.
- 3. Long hours of dedication to the task.
 - a. Hours in prayer.
 - b. Hours of work. Investing in people. Demonstrating concern in practical ways. Being a good neighbor.
- 4. Perseverance even when discouraged.

III. A disciple must learn from Christ to go where the fish are (Matt. 4:23-25).

A. The immediate area needed Christ. “All Galilee” (vs. 23). According to Josephus, Galilee consisted of 204 villages with 15,000 or more in population. It was the most populous area in Israel.

B. The religious community needed Christ, “the synagogues” (vs. 23). Jesus did not neglect those who were outwardly religious. They knew the Old Testament, but they didn’t know Him.

C. The physically afflicted needed Christ, “sickness and disease” (vs. 23). Christ never promised to heal everyone. He never promised that spiritual healing would bring physical healing. But He was concerned with man’s pain and suffering. Christ will often use our compassion for those how are hurting to bring them to Himself.

D. The irreligious community needed Christ, “all Syria” (vs. 24). Notice that it was the fame of Christ which was spread abroad, not the fame of the disciples. The Gentiles in Syria needed Christ.

E. The mentally afflicted needed Christ, “those that were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics” (vs. 24). Mental distress is rampant in our country just as it was in the days of Christ. There is a need for concern for every fact of the population around us.

F. The surrounding area needed Christ, “Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond Jordan” (vs. 25). Don’t set limits on your fishing. The field is the world.

CONCLUSION: Andrew became an effective witness for Christ by following Him everywhere He went. How closely are we following Him?

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON FOUR

1. The first person Andrew brought to Christ was his _____ (John 1:41).
2. Philip knew Andrew because he was from the same _____ (John 1:44)
3. Consider and pray: Do I have relatives and neighbors who need to meet Christ? Am I concerned enough to share the Gospel with them?
4. Look through your personal library of books and CDs. You have invested in them because they reflect your own interests. Now write down the name of one unsaved friend and his or her major interest.

Name _____ Interest _____

5. Consider and pray: Is there a book or CD I could give to an unsaved friend which would appeal to them on their interest level, but would also provide information concerning Christ?
6. Make a list of activities outside of work where you regularly come into contact with unsaved people who you would consider to be more than mere acquaintances.

7. Consider and pray: Do I ever go where the fish are? Should I consider getting involved in an activity which is of interest to me outside of church with the express purpose of coming in contact with those who need Christ? If so, what might that activity involve?

LESSON FIVE

JAMES

CHARACTER TRAIT: TOLERANCE

Overview: There is a very real danger which faces those who choose to follow Christ. It becomes easy for them to assume that their special relationship with Christ excludes others from His concern. In their desire to be close to Christ they forget that He also wants them to be close to those He loves, the lost ones of the world.

This lesson will focus on James, one of the sons of Zebedee, also called the “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). Christ did not hesitate to choose those sons in spite of the character quality of intolerance. But He also was not content to let that remain a part of their spirit as His disciples. He wanted them to learn about the danger of exclusion, the danger of pride and the danger of hatred.

Discipleship must never become a basis for forming cliques which exclude some from fellowship with Christ. It must never become an excuse for self-promotion and jealousy. A disciple must not allow his love for Christ to cause hatred toward even the enemies of Christ.

Lesson Five will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON FIVE

1. Which three disciples were allowed by Christ to witness His power in the raising of the synagogue ruler's daughter (Mark 5:37)?

2. Which three disciples were allowed to witness Christ's glory on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9)?

3. Which three disciples were allowed to witness the grief of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:33)?

4. Which four disciples were given special instruction by Christ concerning end time events (Mark 13:3)?

5. Which two disciples talked their mother into asking Christ if they could have positions closest to Him in the kingdom (Matt. 20:20)?

6. How did the other disciples react to her request when they heard about it (Matt. 20:24)?

7. What kind of people did James and John want to destroy with fire from heaven (Luke 9:54)?

8. Why do you think James and John were known as "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17)?

LESSON FIVE

TEACHING OUTLINE

Texts: Luke 9:46-56; Matthew 20:20-28

Thesis: Disciples must allow Christ to teach them tolerance because it is possible that love for Christ can become a curse to those around us.

I. Disciples face the danger of allowing love for Christ to produce exclusion of others from their lives (Luke 9:46-50).

A. Some were specially chosen by Christ.

1. All twelve disciples were called by name to follow Him (Matt. 10:2-5). They were given power to do His work of preaching, healing and casting out devils.

2. Three disciples were chosen to be with Christ at very important times in His life: Peter, James, and John.

a. The raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:37).

b. The transfiguration (Mark 9:2-8).

c. The Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-43).

d. A time of special instruction concerning end time events (along with Andrew) (Mark 13:3-4).

3. There are those today who share special experiences with Christ which others do not encounter.

B. Christ was not wrong in choosing the twelve or the three.

1. He felt a need for special friends called disciples. These were the ones who were following Him the closest and it was right that they had access to Him at these special times.

2. Christ had a right to choose anyone He wanted. Even Judas was included and who could take it upon himself to admonish Christ for that choice?

C. The disciples were wrong in thinking that the choice of them excluded others.

1. The three made this mistake in regard to the rest of the disciples (Luke 9:46-48). Very soon after each of the accounts of the transfiguration, the Gospel writers record the controversy over which of them was the greatest. Apparently, the experience with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration had given Peter, James

and John the idea that the rest of the disciples were excluded from their privileged position. Christ's answer was to use a child to show them that greatness was not in themselves, but in their acceptance of Him.

2. The twelve, represented by John, made the same mistake (Luke 9:49-50). They rebuked a man for doing the work of God because he was not one of them. Christ's answer was that the only ones excluded from fellowship with Him were those who were against Him. Those who were on His side were to be included even if they were not of the twelve. Fellowship with Christ is something we can share and still not lose.

II. Disciples face the danger of allowing pride of position to exclude others from fellowship with Christ (Matt. 20:20-28).

A. The request of pride (Matt. 20:20-21).

1. A request for earthly glory. The kingdom was still an earthly kingdom in their minds so they were saying, "Lord, we're men of action. Just give us a chance to help you run things around here."

2. A request for pre-eminence. They didn't just want to be close to Christ; they wanted to be closer than the rest of the twelve. The source of pride is not how much I have, but how much MORE I have than someone else.

B. The response of Christ to the request of pride.

1. He told them they had asked without knowledge, "you do not know what you ask," (vs. 22). Discipleship is first of all learning. They had not yet learned what He was trying to teach them.

2. He told them they asked without considering the cost, "are ye able" (vs. 22)? Remember the parables of the king building a tower and the king going to war? They had not considered the cost of discipleship. James would be the first martyr among the twelve (Acts 12:1-2) but he was not asking for martyrdom. He was asking for glory.

3. He told them they had asked without considering God's will. "It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" (vs. 23). If we seize a place of responsibility without God giving it, we act foolishly.

C. The reaction of other disciples to the request of pride (Matt. 20:24).

1. Jealousy. Could their jealousy be because they hadn't thought of asking first? They had all argued about who would be the greatest.

2. Excitement. More feelings and emotions are roused over this controversy than were aroused by Christ's announcement of His impending death. Do we get more excited about a slight to our pride than we do about eternal matters?

3. Division. Even Peter and Andrew join the others against James and John. There is division not only among the twelve but among the three.

D. The rebuke of Christ concerning exclusion (Matt. 20:25-28).

1. In the kingdoms of earth, people are excluded because of the great and proud who rule.

2. In the kingdom of God all are included because the lowly rule.

3. All the disciples were exhibiting pride and they all needed humility. He doesn't single James and John out for rebuke (Vs. 26-27).

4. Christ Himself is the perfect example of the humble service expected from disciples (vs. 28). He lived His life for others. He died a death for others.

III. Disciples face the danger of allowing hatred to exclude others from the love of Christ (Luke 9:51-56).

A. The inciting incident of hatred (Luke 9:51-53).

1. A request for shelter.

a. A simple request. They needed a room for the night.

b. An unusual request. This was a Samaritan village and the relationship between them and the Jews was not good. It was unusual in their minds that Christ would make such a request but it was not unusual in His mind.

2. A negative response.

a. Rejection because He was headed toward Jerusalem. They had no idea who He was and had no desire to find out. They were blinded by their ethnic background and cultural training.

b. They refused to prepare a place for Him, literally and spiritually.

B. The reaction of James and John.

1. Their character revealed as "sons of thunder".

2. Their motive, in their minds, was pure. They were doing this out of love for Christ. He had been rejected and they were defending His honor.

3. Their power, in their minds, was in self, “do you want us to command fire” (vs. 54)? They had forgotten that their power was from Him and that His honor was His own to defend.

C. The rebuke by Christ of exclusion because of hatred.

1. Hatred toward men on the part of the Christian is still Satan inspired, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of” (vs. 55).

2. Everything we do as disciples must have the goal of saving men and not destroying them if we are to follow Christ.

CONCLUSION:

Christ stole the thunder of James and John the sons of thunder. They did change and became known for their love instead of for their hatred. Is there someone or some group which incurs our hatred? To truly be a disciple we must allow Christ to teach us tolerance toward all men.

At the close of the War Between the States a fashionable church in Richmond, Virginia was shocked to see a Negro walk in the door during a service, go down to the front and kneel at the altar. Anger swept through the congregation and yet no one moved. Finally, a tall, distinguished looking gentleman rose from his place in the congregation, strode purposely down to the front, and then knelt beside the Negro man and placed his arm over his shoulders. The tall gentleman's name was Robert E. Lee.

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON FIVE

1. Name one responsibility you fulfill in the church which not everyone else can do or has chosen to do. For example, we can all pray, but we don't all choose to sing in the choir.

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2. Consider and pray: Does the fact that I fulfill that responsibility ever cause me to think of myself above those who are not involved in that ministry? Do I greet people on Sunday morning only if they participate in my chosen area of activity?

3. Of the other ten disciples, who do you think was most indignant about the request of James and John in Matthew 20:20-24?

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4. Consider and pray: Is there someone in the church who holds a position you really think should have been offered to you? Are there grudges from the past which you still nurse and which cause division between you and others in the body of Christ? What do you think Christ would have you do about that?

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5. Make a list of those in our nation who like the Samaritans of old have openly rejected Christ.

6. Consider and pray: What is my spirit and attitude toward members of those groups? Do I hate them and desire to see them destroyed? Do I love them the way Christ loved the Samaritans?

7. Each of the Gospels records the argument concerning who would be greatest soon after recording the story of the Transfiguration. Do you think it is possible for a great experience with Christ to become the source of division between disciples? And if so, what should a true disciple do about such division?

LESSON SIX

JOHN

CHARACTER TRAIT: LOVE

Overview: The writer of the Gospel of John calls himself “one of the disciples, whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23). John was not called that because Jesus loved him more than He did the other eleven. Christ’s love toward all men is unlimited and unconditional. He certainly didn’t see in John something to love which was absent from the others.

When John became a disciple he and his brother James were “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). He was a man with a tendency toward intolerance just like his brother. He used his position with Christ to exclude others and had a very unloving spirit. The reason John calls himself “loved” is simply because he learned to recognize Christ’s love for him. He saw the characteristic or quality of love in Christ and wanted to become Christlike. He allowed Christ’s love to change his life and give him the confidence to demonstrate love toward others. He learned responsibility and hope and how to love others because he was first loved by Christ.

Lesson Six will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON SIX

1. How is John identified in Matt. 10:2?

2. How is John identified in Mark 3:17?

3. How is John identified in Luke 6:14 and Acts 1:13?

4. How is John identified in John 13:23?

5. What special responsibility did Christ give to John just before He died? (John 19:26-27).

6. How does the writer describe John on that occasion?

7. What might cause us to think that John was several years younger than Peter when we read the Gospel of John's account of the resurrection (John 20:1-10)?

8. What description concerning John does the Gospel writer use once again in this passage (John 20:2)?

9. How does the Gospel writer describe himself in John 21:20?

10. What is the predominant word and theme of the epistle written by John the disciple? (See I John)

11. How did John describe the source of his love for Christ (I John 4:19)?

LESSON SIX

TEACHING OUTLINE

Texts: John 13:23; John 19:26; John 20:2; John 21:20-24

Thesis: Disciples need to allow the love of Christ to change their lives.

- I. Disciples should recognize His love and take confidence in it (John 13:23). Four times in the Gospel of John the writer describes John as one “whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:20). By looking at these four places, we can learn how the love of Christ for John changed his life.
 - A. Each disciple questioned his own motives when Christ announced that one would betray Him.
 1. They knew their own capabilities and asked, “Is it I?” (Mark 14:19).
 2. They trusted each other to the extent that no possibility came to mind except self (John 13:22). Even when Judas left, they didn’t seem to connect his leaving with the betrayal.
 3. Each was fearful lest he be the one to betray Christ. None of them could say with certainty that he would not. They recognized the grace of God in their lives.
 - B. Only John took confidence in Christ’s love for him and found the courage to ask who the betrayer would be.
 1. Many years later John looked back at this experience and saw that it was Christ’s love for him which kept him from being the betrayer. Christ didn’t love John more than he loved Judas, but John responded to His love and Judas did not. John saw himself as one who was loved.
 2. John alone of all the disciples got his eyes off himself and onto Christ. That is really the only way we will ever have confidence in the Christian life. As long as we focus on our own ability to do right, we will be disappointed, but when we focus on Christ, He will never disappoint us.

II. Disciples should recognize His love and take responsibility (John 19:26). This is the second time John uses “whom Jesus loved” to describe himself. This time it is in relation to Christ’s asking him to care for Mary, His mother.

A. John did not see himself as personally worthy of such a responsibility but was compelled by love to accept.

1. He had followed afar off. Even though he had gained access to the judgment hall, he had done nothing to defend or help Christ.
2. He had stayed in the background at the cross. Yet at the same time he was distinguished by being the only one of the disciples at that cross.
3. The care of Jesus’ mother was the greatest responsibility Christ felt at the time of His death. Though He cared for and was dying for the whole world, He still cared about one individual.

B. John was unprepared for the responsibility Christ gave him but was compelled by love to agree.

1. John probably had no home of his own. The word is in italics (vs 27). No wife is mentioned in scripture, only his father Zebedee.
2. In spite of his inadequacies he knew Christ was depending on him. At this time Christ’s half-brothers still did not believe, so He asked John to care for Mary.
3. Any unworthiness or inability which we have can be overcome if we recognize the love of Christ. He is the One who makes us worthy. He is the One who gives us the ability to do what He commands.

III. A disciple must recognize the love of Christ and from that love take hope (John 20:2). The third time John describes himself as one “whom Jesus loved” is in the context of the resurrection and the empty tomb. The love of Christ was what gave John hope and caused him to rush to the tomb that Easter morning.

A. Hope in the face of despair.

1. Jesus had been dead three days, no hope.
2. Now there was more bad news, the body was gone. But in the fact that they ran to the tomb, there was a demonstration of hope. They were in despair, but even in despair John could describe himself as the one who was loved.

B. Hope in the face of discouragement.

1. The tomb was empty. That was not seen as proof, but as a discouragement.

2. They were discouraged because they didn't remember the scripture (vs. 9). But even in the face of discouragement, John took hope in the fact that he was loved.

IV. The true disciple needs to recognize the love of Christ and accept His direction for the future (John 21:20). The fourth time he describes himself as the disciple "whom Jesus loved," the incident is precipitated by Peter's question concerning John's future. John remembered this many years later and took confidence in Christ's leading for his future.

A. Others questioned, but John accepted.

1. Peter wanted to know God's will for John.
2. Be careful of those who claim to know God's will for you. Be careful of trying to tell others what God wants them to do. But always be quick to listen to Christ and accept His direction.

B. Others misunderstood, but not John.

1. John understood that Christ was simply teaching Peter a lesson.
2. John trusted in Christ's love and was willing to assume his best future would result if he simply followed Christ's directions.

CONCLUSION: Recognize Christ's love and take hope. "Being confident of this very thing that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON SIX

1. Since John was the disciple Jesus loved, who was the disciple Jesus hated? _____

- a. Peter b. Judas c. Me d. None of the above.

2. Does Jesus love us more: _____

- a. When He saves us. b. When we sin.
c. When we get to heaven. d. None of the above.

3. Consider and pray: Do I take confidence in Christ's unfailing love and remember that His love for me never changes? Do I allow that love to give me confidence in my battle with sin and growth toward holiness?

4. Make a list of the responsibilities Christ has entrusted to you as a disciple. These could include a job, family, church and community responsibilities.

5. Consider and pray: Am I depending on my own abilities and growing frustrated when I fail? Am I willing to accept responsibility on the basis of His love and recognize that He will give me strength to accomplish what He asks me to do? Am I willing to evaluate every responsibility I have accepted to see if that is really what He wants me to do?

6. Three out of the four times John uses "whom Christ loved" to describe himself are in situations where Peter is also prominent. How do you think John saw his relationship to Christ as compared to Peter's relationship to Christ? Is it possible that the fact he was so often in the shadow of Peter caused him to marvel in the truth that Christ loved him?

LESSON SEVEN

PHILIP

CHARACTER TRAIT: CONFIDENCE

Overview: Christ dealt with each one of the disciples individually. He saw their specific needs and met those needs in a personal fashion. With Philip, that need was confidence.

Philip had great zeal and many wonderful abilities but he lacked the confidence of someone like Peter or Andrew. Christ worked with him carefully to help him learn to exercise his abilities by placing confidence in Him.

A true disciple needs to know where to go for help in order to be able to help others. When we draw our strength from Christ it is possible for others to draw strength from us while at the same time learning to depend on Him themselves. This lesson will show how Philip learned to place his confidence in Christ when he lacked speaking ability, faith, skill in witness, and experience.

These are all lessons which we need to learn as well.

Lesson Seven will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON SEVEN

1. To what Old Testament authorities did Philip appeal in order to convince Nathaniel that Jesus was the Messiah (John 1:45)?

2. What part of Philip's description of Christ caused Nathaniel to question his entire argument (John 1:46)?

3. Which disciple did Jesus turn to for answers when the multitude which followed Him needed to be fed (John 6:5)?

4. The Scripture says that Christ asked a question "to prove him." What character quality of Philip was Christ testing (John 6:6)?

5. Did Philip pass or fail the test Christ gave him (John 6:7)?

6. Why did Philip ask Andrew for help when some Greeks approached him about meeting Jesus (John 12:20-22)?

7. What did Philip ask Jesus to do for the disciples in John 14:8?

8. What had Jesus given to Philip which was even better than the experience he requested in John 14:8-18?

9. Describe the change you see in Philip from the description of him in John to the account of his ministry in Acts 8:5-40.

LESSON SEVEN

TEACHING OUTLINE

Texts: John 1:43-46; 12:20-22; 14:6-18; Acts 8:5-40

Thesis: Disciples must learn to place confidence in Christ when help is needed.

I. Disciples often need confidence to overcome a lack of speaking ability (John 1:43-46).

A. Philip's first desire on meeting Christ was to share that knowledge with others. He looked for someone to tell and found Nathaniel.

B. Philip's technique failed to convince Nathaniel.

1. He appealed to the Old Testament, Moses and the Prophets.

2. He recounted what he knew of Christ, "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45).

3. Nathaniel asked questions Philip couldn't answer.

C. To make up for Philip's lack of ability, Christ provided Himself. "Come and see" (vs. 46).

1. Disciples learn that even Bible knowledge is insufficient without Christ.

2. Disciples learn that simple faith in Christ can attract others to Him even when we don't have all the answers.

3. Disciples learn that our purpose must always be to point men and women to Christ.

II. Disciples often need confidence to overcome a lack of faith (John 6:6-14).

A. Christ deliberately tested the faith of Philip because He knew that faith was an area where Philip needed personal growth (John 6:5).

1. He chose to question Philip, not because he wanted Philip to buy bread, but because He saw in him a need for increased faith and confidence.

2. This was no less a test because Christ already knew what He was going to do. Philip needed to learn to depend on Christ to provide rather than depending on human resources.

B. Even when our faith fails, it can be a learning experience.

1. Philip was right that this was impossible by human reckoning. Six months wages would buy enough only for a little bite for each person.
2. Philip was wrong in that he gave no thought to divine power even though he had often been a witness to divine power in the past as a disciple of Christ.
3. His faith failed because he was overwhelmed by the greatness of the task rather than by the greatness of Christ.

C. To strengthen the faith of Philip, Christ provided His power (vs. 8:14).

1. He saw the power of Christ in the confident faith of a fellow disciple as Andrew brought the lad to Christ.
2. He saw the power of Christ in the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes.
3. He saw the power of Christ in his own life as he shared in the miracle by serving the food and gathering the remnant.

III. Disciples often need confidence to overcome their lack of skill in witnessing (John 12:20-22).

A. God sent the Greeks to him because He saw a need for confidence in this area of Philip's life. There is no record after Nathaniel of Philip seeking out people to introduce them to Christ. His first experience at witnessing had apparently discouraged him from trying again (John 12:20).

B. To strengthen Philip's skill in witnessing, Christ provided a mentor (John 12:21-22).

1. Philip sought help from someone who was experienced. Andrew was known for bringing people to Christ.
2. Philip learned from someone who knew what to do. Andrew brought the Greeks straight to Jesus. By helping Philip, Andrew gave him confidence which would later bear fruit (See Acts 8).

IV. Disciples often need confidence to overcome a lack of experience (John 14:6-18).

A. Philip expressed a desire for greater experiential knowledge (John 14:8). He had received three and one-half years of teaching but he wanted further sensory experience. He wanted to "see" the Father.

B. Christ met his need by giving him something better than what he thought he needed. He did not need a greater sensory experience; he needed a greater understanding of the person and work of Christ.

1. To know Christ is to know God (vs. 9).

2. To hear Christ is to hear God (vs. 10).
3. To see Christ's work is to see God's work (vs. 11).
4. To do Christ's work is to do God's work (vs. 12).
5. To ask of Christ is to ask of God (vs. 13-14).
6. To obey Christ is to obey God (vs. 15a).
7. To love Christ is to love God (vs. 15b).
8. To have Christ is to have God the Holy Spirit (vs 16-18).

Conclusion: Philip the disciple learned the lesson of confidence, not in himself, but in Christ. His ministry in Acts 8 reveals how he had learned each of these lessons and allowed confidence in Christ to make up for his abilities which were lacking.

1. Speaking ability: "He preached Christ to them" (Acts 8:5).
2. Faith: He performed miracles in the power of Christ (Acts 8:6).
3. Skill in witnessing: He saw Samaritans believe (Acts 8:12) and led the Ethiopian eunuch to saving faith (Acts 8:37).
4. Experience: He focused his ministry and message on the person and work of Christ (Acts 8:35).

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON SEVEN

1. In place of Nathaniel's question in John 1:46, write down a theological question you have been asked which you were unable to answer.

2. Consider and pray: Have I become discouraged in my efforts to bring others to Christ through an experience of not having an answer to someone's questions? What can I learn from Philip's experience which will help me gain confidence in my witness for Christ?

3. Why did Christ ask Philip where to get bread when He already knew He was going to provide it miraculously?

4. Consider and pray: Do I ever excuse myself for failing a test God brings into my life by reasoning that He knew what I was going to do anyway? Do I ever go beyond that and subtly reason that it is God's fault, since He knew I would fail? Is that what God wants me to learn from testing?

5. If I needed someone to help me bring a group of seekers to Christ, who would I ask for help? Write down a specific name.

6. Consider and pray: Should I ask that person to become my mentor or partner in this important matter of sharing my faith?

7. After reading Acts 8 and seeing the change in the life of Philip from his early days as a disciple, write down one or more changes which you have seen Christ accomplish in your own life since your decision to follow Him as a disciple.

LESSON EIGHT

THOMAS

CHARACTER TRAIT: OPTIMISM

Overview: “Doubting Thomas!”

The descriptive adjective “doubting” has become a part of this disciple’s name. It is almost impossible to think of Thomas without adding that character quality to the mix. He was and still is known for his pessimistic spirit.

But Christ recognized that and worked in the life of Thomas to produce the character trait of optimism. He worked with him on an interpersonal basis, one on one, just as He did with all the other disciples. The goal of Christ in the life of Thomas was to develop in him a positive attitude toward the future.

Christ knew that without such a spirit Thomas would not be effective as a disciple. His bitter, pessimistic spirit would cause him to miss out on present blessings which Christ wanted to give to him. In this lesson we will see how the negative spirit of Thomas denied him the blessings of anticipation, realization, and faith; and how Christ worked to develop in him a spirit of optimism.

Lesson Eight will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON SEVEN

1. How would you characterize the emotional tone of Thomas' comment concerning the death of Lazarus (John 11:16)?

2. How does that contrast with the emotional tone of Jesus' comment concerning the same incident (John 11:15)?

3. How would you characterize the emotional tone of Thomas' question to Christ concerning His return to heaven (John 14:5)?

4. How does that contrast with the emotional tone of Jesus concerning the same impending event (John 14:1-4)?

5. How would you characterize the emotional tone of Thomas' comment concerning Christ's post-resurrection appearance to the disciples (John 20:25)?

6. How does that contrast with the emotional tone of the disciples in reporting Christ's appearance to Thomas (John 20:25)?

7. How would you characterize the emotional tone of Thomas' confession after seeing the risen Lord (John 20:28)?

8. How does the confession itself demonstrate the change which had taken place in Thomas?

LESSON EIGHT

TEACHING OUTLINE

Texts: John 11:7-16; John 14:1-6; John 20:24-29

Thesis: A disciple should develop an optimistic attitude toward his future in Christ.

I. A disciple with a pessimistic spirit will miss out on the blessing of anticipation (John 11:7-16).

A. Thomas' spirit left him without hope (John 11:8).

1. All the disciples despaired for Christ's life. With His death would have come the end of their hopes for a kingdom. They didn't realize that in actuality His death would further the kingdom.
2. Thomas also feared for his own life (vs 16). In his worry about persecution, he missed the anticipation of Christ performing a great work.

B. Thomas' spirit left him without confidence in Christ.

1. He followed Christ as a learner (disciple) but did not have confidence in him as a leader. He didn't trust Christ's ability to protect them or to raise Lazarus from the dead.
2. Christ's power was not limited by Thomas' lack of confidence. It was not to Christ's benefit to produce optimism in Thomas; it was to Thomas' benefit. Because of his negative spirit he missed out on the blessing of learning to trust Christ in a desperate situation.

C. Thomas' spirit left him without a vision of what Christ could do.

1. He witnessed numerous miracles but still could not see the possibility of a miracle in the future.
2. He was told the incident would bring glory to God (John 11:4) but he was still not able to envision any good coming from it.

II. A disciple with a pessimistic spirit will miss out on the blessing of realization (John 14:1-6).

A. Christ made the future real for the disciples (John 14:1-4).

1. He gave them a direct revelation of things to come.

2. They did not need to wait because they had Christ with them and He would be the greatest One in heaven.

B. Thomas refused to grasp the present reality because of his doubting spirit (John 14:5-6).

1. He gave no indication that he recognized who Christ was, “we do not know where you are going” (vs. 5). If he had known Christ was God, he would have known where Christ was going.

2. He gave no indication that he knew why Christ had come “and how can we know the way” (vs. 5)? Christ must have been disappointed that after all those years of teaching Thomas still didn’t even know why Christ had come.

C. Christ used the occasion to give Thomas an optimistic outlook for the future (John 14:6).

1. Christ did not give up on Thomas even though it must have been a disappointment to hear his doubts.

2. The despair of Thomas and the resultant teaching opportunity for Christ produced one of the greatest statements of scripture concerning the Son of God.

- a. Know Christ and you will know the way.

- b. Know Christ and you will know the truth.

- c. Know Christ and you will know the life.

III. A disciple with a pessimistic spirit will miss out on the blessing of faith (John 20:24-29).

A. The pessimistic spirit of Thomas produced a mind of unbelief (John 20:24-25).

1. He missed the meeting of the disciples when Christ appeared.

2. He reacted to their report of God’s blessing with skepticism. Their joy really made his misery even more complete.

- a. He reacted with the jealousy of a guilty conscience.

- b. He refused to share in their joy.

- c. He called his fellow disciples liars, “I will not believe” (Vs. 25).

B. Christ dealt graciously with his unbelief and destroyed it (John 20:26-27).

1. Christ graciously gave Thomas another chance to see Him in His resurrection body.

2. Christ did not ignore the spirit of Thomas' unbelief. He used the same revengeful, bitter, hateful, pessimistic, unbelieving words which Thomas had used. But He spoke them gently and lovingly which caused Thomas to see exactly what his attitude was producing in himself.

C. Thomas responded with a completely different spirit (vs 28).

1. Before, he had not known who Christ was or what He had come to do (John 14:5).

2. Now he utters one of the greatest and fullest testimonies in the scripture to the person of Christ.

a. "My Lord." He was now aware of what Christ had come to do.

b. "My God." He was now aware of who Christ was.

CONCLUSION:

Thomas allowed Christ to deal with his spirit and came to a position of belief. Christ commended him for that, but He added something for us. We can have something even better than what Thomas experienced. We have the opportunity to believe without seeing. How much better it is to trust Christ and anticipate a bright future with Him rather than waiting until it comes and then rejoicing through a grudging spirit. Christ will do His work no matter what attitude we adopt. But we are the losers if we have a pessimistic spirit. We lose out on the blessing of anticipating His work, realizing it has already begun, and living by faith.

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON EIGHT

1. What promises of Christ did Thomas have to ignore in order to remain in despair over the death of Lazarus (John 11:1-16)?

2. Consider and pray: What has happened in my immediate past to get my eyes off what Christ wants for me in the future? Am I allowing my despair over present circumstances to obscure the vision of what Christ can do in my life?

3. Christ's wonderful statement in John 14:6 comes in response to a pessimistic and uncomprehending question from Thomas. What does that tell us about the way Christ is willing to work with us?

4. Consider and pray: Do I refuse to speak honestly with Christ about my doubts and disappointments because I have the idea that He will grow angry with me and chastise me for doubting? What can I learn from the story of Thomas about how Christ wants to work in my life?

5. Every time we see Thomas in the gospel of John, he is in conversation with Christ. Do you think the Holy Spirit through John was telling us something about Thomas by showing us his statements in contrast with those of the One he was following? If so, what lesson should be learned from the correlation?

LESSON NINE

MATTHEW

CHARACTER TRAIT: SACRIFICE

Overview: Matthew was an unlikely disciple. He was not a fisherman like so many of the others. He was not a well-liked Jew, in fact, he was hated by his neighbors. His wealth could easily have interfered with him becoming a disciple. Christ could have refused to accept him because his presence as a tax-collector would not enhance the overall reputation of the group.

But neither Matthew nor Christ worried about what people were saying. He became a disciple, was accepted by the others as a disciple, and learned from his time with Christ just like the others.

The one area where Christ worked with Matthew, perhaps because he was rich, was the area of sacrifice. Matthew learned not to worry about what he had been before meeting Christ. He learned not to worry about what he had left behind. He learned not to worry about gaining proper recognition and he learned not to worry about the criticism of others. All those lessons related to his becoming willing to sacrifice for Christ.

Lesson Nine will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON NINE

1. What descriptive word concerning himself does Matthew use which none of the other writers use in their lists of the disciples?

2. Who were the friends of Matthew who joined Christ for dinner after Matthew's call to discipleship? (Mt. 9:11-13)?

3. What does Luke tell us that Matthew left behind when he followed Christ's call to discipleship (Luke 5:28)?

4. What does Matthew tell us he left behind when he followed Christ's call to discipleship (Matt. 9:9)?

5. Where do Mark and Luke say the dinner with Matthew's friends was held (Mark 2:15; Luke 5:29)?

6. Where does Matthew say the dinner with his friends was held (Matt. 9:9)?

7. Who objected to the dinner at Matthew's house (Mt. 9:11)?

8. Who later showed up at dinner at the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-37)?

9. Why was Christ able to move through all strata of society and convince people from every walk of life that He cared about them?

LESSON NINE

TEACHING OUTLINE

Text: Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:28-29; Mark 2:15

Thesis: True disciples must learn the importance of being willing to sacrifice everything in order to follow Christ.

I. A true disciple will not worry about what he was before he met Christ (Matt. 9:9-13).

A. A true disciple will freely admit his past.

1. Matthew described himself as a publican while the other gospel writers didn't. The term was similar to "quisling." A publican was a traitor, in the employ of Rome and often associated with "sinner" in scripture.

2. Matthew recognized that part of his life was past. Levi became Matthew in the same way that Saul became Paul and Simon became Peter.

B. A true disciple will not glory in his past.

1. Though Matthew mentions it, he does not dwell upon it.

2. He was not proud of what he had been.

C. A true disciple will realize his salvation came in spite of his past.

1. It could even be said that salvation is because of the past in the sense that the past has made salvation necessary. Jesus calls Matthew a sinner and he accepts that title because he has repented and knows that being a sinner made repentance necessary.

2. Christ chose him not for who he was, but for what he could become.

II. A true disciple will not worry about what he has left behind.

A. All things became secondary when he met Christ.

1. He left his wealth (Luke 5:28) without mentioning it (Matt. 9:9).

2. He left his means of accumulating more wealth.

3. He left his friends, his community, and his future, without regret. That was one of Christ's requirements for discipleship (Luke 9:23-26).

B. We take into discipleship only what we can use for His service.

1. Matthew took himself and those abilities which were part of him. Everything else he sacrificed.

2. God used what Matthew was, rather than what he had. God used his writing ability. He became the author of the first Gospel, the writer of many of the discourses of Christ.

III. A true disciple will not worry about gaining his proper recognition (Matt. 9:10; Mark 2:15; Luke 5:29).

A. Matthew used what he had to bring others to Christ.

1. He used hospitality as a method of witness. He had Christ as a guest in his home and invited others so they could be introduced to Christ.

2. He reached out to those of his own status and occupation. The publicans were among the people the other disciples could not and probably would not have reached.

B. There was no concern on his part that he receive recognition for what he had done.

1. In his Gospel he doesn't even mention that he held the feast.

2. To him the glory of God was the motive, not the glory of self. That is a lesson every true disciple needs to learn. The growth of a ministry often leads to a recognition factor which is not worthy of true discipleship.

IV. A true disciple will not worry about criticism (Matt. 9:11).

A. The Pharisees questioned Christ's friendship with Matthew.

1. "Publicans and sinners" was directed toward Matthew.

2. They tried to find fault with Christ by pointing to His associations.

3. They made their complaint to the other disciples, perhaps expecting sympathy from them?

B. Matthew allowed Christ to answer for him.

1. In His answer Christ vindicated himself, embraced Matthew, and showed the Pharisees why they were not His friends.

2. Years later Matthew recorded the criticism but also the answer. He knew that his former sin was the very reason Christ had become his Savior and friend.

CONCLUSION:

Discipleship will not become a reality until we get our eyes off those around us, sacrifice selfish interests, and focus our minds on Christ.

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON NINE

1. Using a Bible concordance, find the only other reference in the gospel of Matthew to the author after Matthew 9:9.

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2. Consider and pray: If I were writing a gospel, would I make more than two references to myself in the entire book? Do I really strive to see that the glory for what I do goes to Christ instead of myself?

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3. How did Matthew's new relationship with Christ affect his old relationships with "publicans and sinners" (Matt. 9:10)?

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4. Consider and pray: Do I have any friends among the "sinners" of this world? If Christ were to come over for dinner, do I have any unsaved friends who would be willing to meet Him at my house because they know I care about them?

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5. Why do you think the Pharisees approached the other disciples with their criticism of Matthew (Matt. 9:11)?

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6. Consider and pray: Do people come to me with criticism because they think I will listen to them and become a part of their contention? What can I learn from the way Christ handled the criticism of the Pharisees concerning Matthew?

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7. In the only autobiographical passage in his entire gospel, Matthew avoids any mention of his sacrifice for Christ. What do you think that says about the spirit with which he made that sacrifice?
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LESSON TEN

JUDAS

CHARACTER TRAIT: SINCERITY

Overview: Judas, of all the twelve, was the model disciple. He was accepted fully by the others as their equal. He worked miracles along with them in the name of Christ. He was trusted as their treasurer and by their own testimony did not come under suspicion even at the Last Supper. Only later did the Gospel writers mention his faults, something they had not recognized at the time.

Yet Judas committed what many would consider to be the worst sin ever perpetrated. It happened because, of all the disciples, Judas did not allow Christ to change his life.

He was a hypocrite, had a tremendous need for sincerity, but refused to go one on one with Christ. This lesson will show how sin left to itself will grow. As disciples we can learn from Judas what it means to allow Christ to deal with sin in our lives before it grows and begins to dominate us.

Lesson Ten will include:

A personal Bible study to be completed before the session begins.

A Bible teaching outline for personal or group use.

A personal action sheet to be completed following the teaching outline.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY: LESSON TEN

1. What did Jesus know about Judas even at the time He chose him to be a disciple (John 6:70)?

2. What are the actual words of Judas in John 12:4-6?

3. What does John tell us about the sub-text of those words from his vantage point while writing several years after these events?

4. Who motivated Judas to betray Christ? (Luke 22:3)?

5. Who paid Judas to betray Christ? (Luke 22:4-5)?

6. What kept Judas from betraying Christ earlier (Lk. 22:6)?

7. What was Christ's attitude toward Judas even to the end (John 13:1-3)?

8. Why do you think Christ handed Judas the morsel of bread at the Last Supper (John 13:26)?

9. Why did Judas choose the Garden of Gethsemane as the place of betrayal (John 18:1-2; Luke 22:6)?

10. What does the fact that Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss tell you about his heart's attitude (Matt. 26:48-49)?

11. How can you reconcile Matthew's account of Judas' death (Matt. 27:3-10) with Luke's account (Acts 1:16-21)?

LESSON TEN

TEACHING OUTLINE

Texts: John 6:70-71; John 12:5-6; Luke 22:3-6; John 13:1-30; John 18:2-5; Acts 1:16-20; Matthew 27:3-10

Thesis: A disciple must allow Christ to deal with sin in his life if he is to learn sincerity.

I. A true disciple must allow Christ to deal with sin when it is yet a seed (John 6:70-71).

A. Judas was a devil from the beginning.

1. An adversary, he was never really true to Christ.
2. Christ knew that when He chose him. In one sense He chose Judas because prophecy needed to be fulfilled, but in another sense, He chose him because He loved him and wanted to see Judas forsake his sin and really follow Christ.

B. Judas was a betrayer from the beginning.

1. This was not a sudden impulse at the end of his life. Instead, it was a condition which had grown. He was capable of evil from the start.
2. His position made the sin even greater. He was “one of the twelve” (vs. 71).

II. A true disciple must allow Jesus to deal with the heart (soil) that produces sin (John 12:5-6).

A. Hypocritical soil.

1. Posed as one who cared for the poor.
2. Pious enough to criticize those who were concerned about Christ.

B. Dishonest soil.

1. Dishonesty was part of the growth of sin. Pilfering and shoplifting often pre-date robbery and burglary.
2. Christ knew he was a thief but none of the other twelve suspected anything.

C. Covetous soil.

1. His master was money.
2. A disciple cannot serve two masters.

III. A true disciple must allow Christ to deal with initial growth (sprout) of sin in the life (Luke 22:3-6).

A. His sin was cultivated by Satan.

1. Satanic possession helps to explain that Judas was not a believer.
2. At the same time, Judas remained responsible for his own actions.

B. His sin was watered by his own covetousness.

1. Apparently money was all he asked for from the Pharisees.
2. His affections were completely focused on the material world.

C. His sin was allowed to grow unchecked. He “sought opportunity” (Luke 22:6).

IV. Allow Christ to prune sin from your life (John 13:1-30).

A. Christ had perfect knowledge of Judas’ sins.

1. He knew of the sin of Judas and still loved him (John 13:1).
2. He knew of the will of God and still loved Judas (John 13:3).
3. He knew Judas’ goal and still loved him (John 13:11).

B. Christ warns him about his sin (John 13:11, 21).

1. He told them about the betrayal so that Judas would know that Jesus knew.
2. He told them without naming Judas so that he would still have an opportunity to repent.

C. Christ dealt with his sin in mercy (John 13:26).

1. Christ let Judas know exactly where he stood.
2. Even at that last moment He gave him room to repent.

V. A true disciple must allow Christ to open his eyes to the development of sin in his life (John 18:2-5).

A. Judas was a man in the wrong company. He belonged with the disciples but had left them for the company of God’s enemies.

B. Judas was a man with the wrong purpose in life. He chose betrayal.

C. Judas was a man with a calloused heart (Luke 22:47-48).

1. An act of loyalty and friendship was used to betray.

2. The very act of betrayal went against everything he had heard, seen, learned and known about Jesus Christ.

VI. A true disciple must allow Christ to make him aware of the end (fruit) of sin (Acts 1:16-20).

A. Judas' death was the reward of covetousness (Acts 1:18).

B. Judas' death was the wage of sin (Acts 1:19).

C. Judas' heritage resulted in a reputation for sin (Acts 1:19).

1. His reputation was known to all Jerusalem.

2. His reputation is known to all men. Not even dogs are named Judas. But look at all the Peters and Johns and James in the world.

CONCLUSION:

How much satisfaction did Judas receive from his sin? The material reward bought him a place of death. The emotional reward brought him to the place of suicide. The spiritual reward brought him eternity in hell. How much better off he would have been had he allowed Christ to deal with his sin from the very start.

PERSONAL ACTION SHEET: LESSON TEN

1. Not everyone is a thief like Judas (John 12:6) but every person grapples with sin in life. Name one sin which has continued to plague you since the day you were saved.

2. Consider and pray: At what stage of growth is that sin filling at the present time? Is it still a seed, a sprout, a full-grown plant or a fruit-bearing plant? At what stage should a person plan to allow Christ to deal with sin?

3. At what point in the process of betrayal do you think your love for Judas might have ceased?

4. When did Christ's love for Judas cease (John 13:1)?

5. Consider and pray: Are there those who have betrayed me? Have I allowed their betrayal to destroy my love for them? Am I in need of forgiving others as Christ has forgiven me?

6. Christ used a variety of methods to clue Judas into the fact that He knew what was going on in Judas' mind and life. What does Christ use in our lives to let us know that He is aware of secret sins?

7. Consider and pray: Have I developed a callous heart toward the work Christ is trying to do in my life? What is my heart attitude toward the preaching of the Word, personal Bible study, and the loving admonitions of close friends?

8. What can I personally learn from the experience of Judas about the satisfaction which sin can bring to my life?

SNAPSHOTS

A BIBLE GAME

In this game the story from John 1:44-51 will be told with the help of a group of four people who provide SNAPSHOTS at key points in the story. Choose your Kodak group from the audience as volunteers and identify the emotions they should display at each SNAPSHOT point.

Philip is chosen as a disciple – the group demonstrates EXCITEMENT.

“Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” – the group demonstrates SURPRISE.

“How do you know me?” – the group demonstrates SHOCK.

“When you were under the fig tree I saw you.” – the group demonstrates AMAZEMENT.

“Rabbi, you are the Son of God.” – the group demonstrates ADORATION.

“You will see greater things than these.” – the group demonstrates JOY.

As the narrator tells the story, the SNAPSHOT group forms a Kodak moment each time the storyteller pauses. The group demonstrates the proper emotion and holds that pose until the next time the narrator pauses.

Narrator: Once upon a time as Jesus was starting to call His twelve disciples, He visited the city of Bethsaida where Andrew and Peter lived. There was another man in the city named Philip. Philip had a close friend whose name was Nathaniel. Jesus chose Philip to be one of His disciples and when he did, Philip got very EXCITED (Pause).

Philip wanted Nathaniel to become a follower of Jesus as well, so he went to look for Him. Nathaniel was sitting under a fig tree and Philip ran up to him all excitedly and told him they had found the Messiah, the One Moses and the prophets had written about. His name was Jesus of Nazareth. Nathaniel didn't think much of the city of Nazareth. In fact, almost everyone in the country despised the people from Nazareth. “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” said Nathaniel with great SURPRISE (Pause).

Instead of arguing with him, Philip just told him to “Come and see.” Hurrying down the road, Philip led Nathaniel to where he had just left Jesus. When Jesus saw them coming, he called out, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit.” Nathaniel looked around to see if maybe Jesus was talking to someone else but He wasn't. He was talking to him just as if He already knew him. “How do you know me?” Nathaniel asked with great SHOCK (Pause).

Jesus waited until they came a little closer. Then He looked at Nathaniel with eyes of love, knowing just what it would take to convince him that Jesus was really the One He claimed to be. “I saw you sitting under the fig tree,” said Jesus. Nathaniel couldn't believe his ears. It

would have been impossible for Jesus to have seen him under the fig tree unless He could see everything and know everything. He stared at Jesus with great AMAZEMENT (Pause).

Finally, Nathaniel was able to speak. He looked at Jesus and said to Him. “Rabbi, you are the Son of God. You are the king of Israel.” His face gazed at the Messiah with great ADORATION (Pause).

Jesus could see that Nathaniel believed in Him and was ready to become a disciple. He promised Nathaniel that seeing him under the fig tree was nothing compared to what Nathaniel would witness in the next few years. He would see much greater things, like the miracles Jesus would perform as well as His resurrection from the dead. Nathaniel did not know what to say, he just stared at his Messiah with great JOY (Pause).

The end.

Have fun!

This Bible game can be used with other scripture passages as well.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

A BIBLE GAME

When the disciples were called by Christ, they were not speaking English. Most likely they spoke in either Aramaic or Hebrew. Would you like to learn some Hebrew?

All right, repeat the following sounds after me.

Ha

Le

Lu

Yah

Now, say all the sounds together in that order. Ha Le Lu Yah. I'll bet someone can translate that for us. What does it mean? Praise Ye the Lord.

(You might want to use the chorus "Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah" here with one half of the group singing the Hebrew and the other part the English.)

Since another language was being used when Jesus called His disciples, let's try to get a feel for what it might have sounded like had we been there.

Read Matthew 4:17-22.

Choose two people to be James and John pretending to speak in Hebrew.

Choose one person to translate what they are saying into English.

The scene is in the fishing boat after Jesus has called them to follow but before they climb out and leave their father to become disciples.

Have James and John tell the story pretending to speak in Hebrew (using gibberish rather than words). Instruct them to use gestures and try to communicate the story even though their audience cannot understand.

Once James or John has said a sentence, instruct the translator to tell the audience what was said, in effect retelling the Bible story.

Have fun!

This Bible game can be used with other scripture passages as well.

ALPHABET STORYTELLING

A BIBLE GAME

Everyone in the entire group will be included in this game.

Read aloud Luke 9:46-56 encouraging everyone to remember the story in order to be able to tell it again.

Have everyone stand.

The point of the game is to retell the story in single sentences with each sentence starting with the next letter of the alphabet. If someone cannot think of a new sentence with the next letter of the alphabet, that person will sit down. See how many people are left standing by the time the entire alphabet has been used in the telling of the story. If the story is not complete by the time the alphabet has been used, start with A again.

For example:

“**A**nd the disciples started to argue about who was the greatest.”

“**B**ut Jesus knew what was in their hearts.”

“**C**alling to a little child, He set the child in front of them.”

Then continue with **D**, **E**, **F**, etc.

Help people remember the next letter by calling it out if necessary. Remembering the order of the alphabet does not need to be part of the game.

Allow for creative answers like “X marks the spot where all these things happened.”

Have fun.

This Bible game can be used with other scripture passages as well.

QUESTIONS!

A BIBLE GAME

For this game four contestants will be necessary, two on each team.

Read aloud Matthew 18:21-35.

Instruct Team one to tell the story from the viewpoint of Peter. Team two will tell the story from the viewpoint of Christ.

But every part of the story must be phrased as a question. If the first person cannot think of a question, he or she will tag their partner in order to continue the game. If a person answers without framing it as a question, the partner must step in to take their place even without being tagged.

For example:

Team One: "May I ask you a question, Jesus?"

Team Two: "What question do you want to ask, Peter?"

Team One: "If my brother sins against me should I forgive him seven times?"

Team Two: "Why stop at seven?"

Etc.

The game continues until the entire story has been told.

If you want to make it more of a competition, have a person from the audience replace anyone who fails to tell the story in the form of a question and doesn't remember to tag his or her partner.

Have fun.

This Bible game can be used with other passages of scripture as well.

