

Yesterday. Today. Forever.

Module 2: Loving the Story

Lesson 1: Come, Follow Me

Objectives

Students will

- demonstrate understanding of first century education and discipleship
- explain the metaphor of carrying one's cross
- articulate their own relationship with Jesus

Materials Needed

- Bibles
- whiteboard/ Chart paper and markers
- pen/pencil and paper
- colourful markers
- video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCtrsJ6nSio> (Clip is 10:27-13:29, 13:29-16:05, 16:05-23:27, 28:11-33:25. You may choose to download this video and splice them accordingly.)
- Appendix A: Stages of Jewish Education in Jesus Time
- Appendix B: Cross Metaphor Handout (one copy for each student)
- cardstock crosses (see last page in lesson) (enough for 1 for each student)
- yarn cut into necklace lengths (enough for 1 for each student)

Pre-lesson preparation

- Watch the video. As we are only using segments, it is important that you are familiar with where to stop and start. We advise you to watch all videos ahead of time to ensure all content is appropriate for your group.
- Print the Appendix A: Stages of Jewish Education in Jesus Time for reference when you are asking students questions about the stages of Jewish education
- Cut the crosses out of cardstock and punch a hole in top

Minds On

Approximately 10 minutes

Think/pair/share: Ask the students to take a moment and to think about their education so far, and what they think it will be like as they continue on. What was the first kind or “stage” of school they ever attended, and what different kinds or stages of schools or educational experiences they think they will go to in the future? Give the students a moment to think about the question, then ask them to turn to a partner and share. Give the students a few minutes to share, and take a few answers asking: “What did you hear a partner say would be their educational path? What stages will they go through?”

Next ask the students “What do you think will be the hardest challenge you will ever face in any stage of your education? Something that might be really hard?” Tell the students to take a few minutes to think and say you will take volunteers to share their thoughts. Because of the potentially personal nature of the question, it is better to take volunteers than having students share with each other.

Action

Approximately 50 min

Prompt: Tonight we are going to be watching a video about different stages in Jewish education in the time of Jesus. Your job is to figure out what happened during each stage of education. Try to notice at least three interesting facts from each phase. We will be pausing at various points to make sure we understand what is being said, and to write down some important points to use in our discussion later on.

Begin video at the 10:27 mark: The first stage of education.

Play until 13:29 when he says, “Are we tracking?”

Ask the students: What are the most important points of the stage called Bet Sefer?

Give the students a moment to recall, and then take some answers, writing their points on the chart paper or whiteboard. If students are shy about volunteering answers, you can try to draw them out with questions like, “How old are students in Bet Sefer?” “What does Bet Sefer mean?” “What do they study?”, “What does the Rabbi put on their slates and why?” (Use Appendix A as a reference for the correct answers)

Return to video where you left off.

Play until 16:05 when he says that Mary would have been ‘Bet Talmud’.

Again, have students help you write out on the board a description of Bet Talmud (Use Appendix A: Stages of Jewish Education in Jesus Time as a reference for the correct answers).

Prompt: If you lived back in Jesus’ time, you would have been at this stage in school. Let’s use ‘Whole Body Voting’ to show how well you think you would have done at Bet Talmud. Wait until I say go: If you think you would have been at the top of your class, stand on your tiptoes with your arms reaching up towards the ceiling: be as tall as possible. If you think you would have flunked out of this stage of school, lay down on the floor: get as low as possible. If you think you would just pass, somewhere in the middle. Ok, go!

Debrief the voting. You can ask specific students about the position they chose, or ask them by groups: To those who think they’d have passed, ask Those who think they would have moved on to Bet Talmud, who thinks they’d be on track to pass that level. To those who don’t think they’d have passed Bet Sefer, Why don’t you think you’d have been able to pass? Listen to their answers and acknowledge that they are legitimate. Again, to those who don’t think they’d be good enough, listen to their reasons and validate them. Let’s see what was next for students who made it through to the next level.

Return to video where you left off

Play until 23:27 “because you won’t be studying to be a Rabbi”

Summarize on the board the meaning of Bet Midrash (Use Appendix A as a reference for the correct answers).

Prompt: We now have a description of the ancient Jewish educational system up here on the board. We’ve thought about how well we might do if school looked like this for us. We are now going to look into the Bible and see this working out in the lives of some fishermen from Galilee.

Read or have a student read Matthew 4:18-22, 9:9.

Ask the following questions:

1. Why are they working in the family business? (they aren’t following a Rabbi, they weren’t good enough)
2. Why do you think they leave their nets? (a Rabbi invited them, a great honour in their culture)

Have students turn to a neighbour and discuss the following questions: Collect answers from the group. Highlight the fact that these first disciples were not the best of the best.

Read or have a student read Matt 14:25-33.

Play video from 28:11 to 33:25 “Jesus has great faith in His students”.

Prompt: In John 15:16, Jesus says, “You did not choose me,” (which is how disciples usually came to follow a rabbi), “but I chose you.” Jesus chooses even those the world doesn’t think are good enough. He sees more. He sees someone who can be like Him and he chooses you, and me. He calls to you and says, “Come, follow me.” He has faith that you can do it!

Prompt: Following Jesus is that simple, but it isn’t easy. Jesus warns us that it won’t be easy and we are going to look at that now. In a moment I am going to number you off so

you can meet in smaller groups to look at a few bible verses and work through some questions. I will give each group an instruction and question sheet. When you find your group, sit down and I will come by and give your group the sheet.

Number students off 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, etc.

Ask: Does anyone NOT have a number? If yes, then give them a number, then indicate where each group will meet: 1s over here, 2s over here etc. Go, find your group.

Move through the groups and give each a copy of Appendix B: Cross Metaphor Handout. Give the students about 20 minutes to work through the sheets together as a group. Have the groups share their answers to the questions.

Prompt: Some of you have begun following Jesus and have noticed it can be hard at times. Some of you are not sure about Jesus and aren't ready yet to follow him, but are curious to know Him more. Every day you make decisions to follow Jesus or not, to get to know Him more or not. To help you remember that Jesus believes in you and to think about where you are with respect to following Jesus, we are going to make our own crosses to carry.

Consolidate/Debrief

Approximately 15 minutes

Bring out the cardstock crosses, markers and yarn. Have students write "Jesus believes in Me" on one side of the cross and on the other, they can be more personal and write a statement about where they are at with Jesus. Some suggested options are:

- I believe in Jesus
- I am following Jesus
- I want to know Jesus more

- I am curious about Jesus
- I am starting to be interested in Jesus
- I don't know Jesus

If you have time, give students an opportunity to decorate and personalize the crosses more. Invite students to wear their crosses and to share them with you and each other.

Take a moment to pray, and ask that Jesus would help each of us to realize that he has chosen each of us and called us to follow him, and to take up our crosses to do what is necessary to follow through even when it gets tough. Thank God that he will give us the strength to follow him. The One who has called us will give us the ability to follow.

Appendix A: Stages of Jewish Education in Jesus Time

Bet Sefer

- ages 6-10
- “House of The Book”
- memorizing Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)
- honey on slates and fingers, “May the words of God be like honey on your tongue”
- all about scripture

Bet Talmud

- ages 10-14
- “House of Learning”
- memorizing entire Hebrew Scripture
- learning the art of questions and answers
- as far as girls would go in education (they would be getting married at the end of this stage)

Bet Midrash

- age 14ish
- student applies to Rabbi
- Rabbi will quiz student
- Rabbi will then invite student to “Follow Me” becoming disciple
- Rabbi will only choose the best of the best
- disciples want to know what Rabbi knows, do what Rabbi does, be as much like Rabbi as possible, to follow so closely as to be “covered in the dust of their Rabbi”
- if not chosen (not good enough) told to learn family business

Appendix B: Cross Metaphor Handout

Read Matthew 16:24 and Luke 9:23

Jesus is using a figure of speech called a metaphor. Jesus is saying that following Him is **like** carrying a cross, not carrying a physical cross around. Jesus only physically carried a cross on one day and for a short time that day at that. There is something about his carrying a cross that compares to following Jesus, to figure out what that might be, come up with a list of words or ideas that actually carrying the cross would have been like.

Using sense words (looks like, sounds like, feels like, smells like, tastes like) describe what you think carrying an actual cross would be like:

