

Yesterday. Today. Forever.

Module: Living the Story

Lesson 4: With a “Baa Baa” Here, and a “Bleat Bleat” There

Objectives:

Students will

- know we will be judged by how we embody Christ to others
- be able to articulate the difference between “sheep” and “goats” as Matthew 25:31-46
- make a plan for a compassion activity

Materials Needed

- white board/chart paper and markers
- Bibles
- wall-safe tape
- post-it notes
- markers
- Living the Story Lesson 4 Animal Faces file, printed out
- reading glasses without lenses
- a crown (Burger King crown would be fine)
- Living the Story Lesson 4 Station Cards file – consider copying these onto cardstock or attach them to construction paper for backing. Either have 2 cards or attach matching stations to two sides of the same sign
- popsicle sticks numbered individually as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (several sets)

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Before the session begins, draw the outline of a large sheep on a piece of chart paper or whiteboard (See Appendix A: Sheep below. Use this appendix as a help to outline the sheep or consider photocopying it onto a transparency and projecting it to trace). Above the sheep, write: “Characteristics of a Christ-follower”
- Set five clear and separate stations. At each station place the appropriate station card and a large piece of chart paper. In a perfect world, you have five colours of markers, one colour at each station, with enough markers for all members of the group. Otherwise, make sure there is enough markers at each station for all group members. Preferably, your stations will be more or less in a circle
- Number Popsicle sticks individually with the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, enough sets for every member to get one Popsicle stick.

Minds On

Approximately 10 minutes

During this activity students will be asked to consider the following question: what do you think are the characteristics of a Christ-follower?

As students enter the room, give each student 3 or 4 Post-it notes and a pen/pencil. When you hand them the materials tell each student to write on each Post-it note a word or phrase that they think describes a Christ-follower. If they would like to use more than a few Post-it notes allow them to continue to write as many words or phrases as the time allows.

Tell students that every time they complete a Post-it, they are to tag into onto the sheep. They can continue adding to the sheep until you signal that the time is up.

Note: Leader Tip

If students arrive at slightly different times, use this activity as one that allows for other students to start while not having all students present.

Let students know that the time is up and that they should find a seat.

Prompt: The Bible often refers to followers of Christ as “sheep” with Jesus as shepherd. Let’s take a look at some of the descriptors that you wrote on this sheep.

Take a few minutes to highlight some of the words or ideas that students wrote. If there are repeated ideas, ask students why they think this is the case. If some need clarifying, ask students to explain a little what they mean.

Note: Leader Tip

Each student will be at a different place in his or her journey. Some students might not have much to contribute to this discussion. Some students may have posted negative

attributes. Some students may have more questions. Try to address what you can briefly, assuring students that their personal experience is valid, but also let students know that they will understand more as they go through this lesson.

Action

Approximately 50 minutes

Transition to the Action by explaining that Jesus tells a story in Matthew 25:31-46 about the characteristics of a sheep – a follower of Jesus.

To tell this story, get four student volunteers. You will use a structure called Readers Theatre, where the scene emerges as you read, without elaborate preparation. Give one student a crown: they will read the part of the King. Give one student the ‘sheep face’: they will read the part of the “righteous”. Give another student the ‘goat face’: have them read the part of the “ones on the left”. Lastly, give another student a pair of reading glasses with the lenses out: they will read the parts that remain (as the narrator).

Have these students read through/act out the story in front of the large group.

Once you’ve gone through the story, tell the students that some people find that story alarming, since it paints two very different outcomes for those on the left and right of Jesus. Next, explain that students will be divided into five groups to look more carefully at the passage. Tell them there are 5 stations around the room, each with different questions. Students will do the activity at their station until the signal to “switch!” at which point they will leave their leaders and materials behind and switch to the next. Tell them their job at each station is discuss the scripture passage they find there using the questions on the card. After their discussion, they THEN answer only the last question by everyone in their group writing on the chart paper. By the end of the lesson, the chart paper should be VERY full of writing! (See Appendix A for the station titles, scriptures and questions.)

Instructor's Note: Graffiti Structure

This lesson uses a variant of Graffiti, which is a cooperative learning structure. Normally, the groups stay put, and pass the chart paper from group to group, with each group answering a central question from their perspective. Groups should not read each other's responses until the very end. At that time, students usually make note of which answers have been repeated again and again, or those that fall into similar categories, and these answers can provide the basis for conclusions or further action. In this version, the paper stays still, and the groups move from question to question. Ideally, each group will have their own colour of marker, which they will take with them from station to station. In that way, when looking at the paper at the end, groups can see which groups made which contributions. If different colours are not possible, the page can be divided into sections for each group, or all groups can just write wherever.

Next, divide the students into groups: to do so, place the Popsicle sticks in the middle of the room/group. Have each student take one. Ask if any student does NOT have a Popsicle stick, and provide them with one. Tell students to go to the station that matches the number on their Popsicle stick. Ensure that there is a leader at each location. If you do not have a leader for each station, be sure to have the leaders float and listen into to student discussion. Have leaders check in with students and see if they have further questions.

4 minutes into each rotation, tell the students they should start answering question 4. Be sure to signal the necessary rotations every 6 minutes.

Prompt: Leaders, papers and cards stay. Groups... SWITCH! If you were at 5, go to station 1, if you were at 1 go to station 2...

Repeat the switching 6 times. All groups will be at their home table. Get the students' attention and say.

Prompt: You should now all be at your home station. Look through your chart paper, Try to notice if any ideas were repeated. Choose one instance of the idea, and put an asterisk beside it for every time it was repeated. It is useful to do this out loud so your partners can hear you.. You have 3 minutes! Go!

At the end of the three minutes, have the students return their focus to the large group. Ask each group to share any responses that were repeated often. Follow-up with this activity by asking students (try having one person from each group answer at least one of the questions on the list so that all groups answer: depending on time, take more answers being sensitive to the mood and level of engagement of the group):

1. What was different between what you thought a Christ-follower was and what this scripture says a Christ-follower is?
2. What are the common themes that came up at each station for your group?
3. Why do we not take care of the people that Christ thinks are so important?
4. What are the barriers to knowing people on this list? What might be “hard” about living up to this scripture?

Instructor’s Note: Group Discussion based on Questions

Be careful not to be ‘married’ to a list of questions. Sure, sometimes, it is very important to make sure a particular question gets answered, but if the students are interested and engaged and talking about things that are closely related, the learning can become more authentic. A good teacher can notice when the conversation is hovering around an important topic, and throw away, change or add questions to make the experience as rich as possible.

Consolidate/Debrief

Approximately 15 minutes

Return to a large group setting and prepare to make a plan, to consider what is an initiative, idea, or challenge that your group can do over the next month or so?

Based on the things jotted down on chart paper during the Action portion, use your whiteboard or a fresh piece of chart paper to create a list from the students of things they would be really passionate about doing. Ask the groups to put their hands up if they have any ideas that have 2 asterisks? Keep your hands up if they had 3... keep them up if 4...etc. Your goal is to find a 'sweet spot' where there were a ideas as popular, but not too many (ideally you will end up with a list of about 5 ideas). Ask the students to share all the ideas on their sheet with 3 or more (or 4 or more... depending) asterisks. Write these down on the chart paper. Ask if there is any really important idea that somehow got missed? Write that down too.

Ask the students to vote on their two favorite ideas on the list. One at a time, read each item and ask the students to vote. Try to isolate the two most popular ideas. You can narrow it down to one, or if you have the resources, find a way for your group to do both ideas, if you have enough students.

Try to make a specific, attainable, and beneficial set of goals or ideas. Examples of ideas include:

- Bake together for a nursing home, and then make a visit to the nursing home to hang out with the elderly.
- Do a clothing drive, and then volunteer at a shelter/organization to help sort donated clothing and hear about the demographic of people they serve.
- Consider a community organization that is underfunded or in need of assistance. Raise funds for that organization, and volunteer a day (or more!) to serve there.
- Consider new parents in your community, someone who is sick, or someone else that could use a blessing and make them a meal

If time permits, work through the Event Planning Cheat Sheet (separate document). If time does not permit, consider setting a time with the students strictly for event planning. Set a date. Make it happen.

Close together in prayer. Ask if there are any students who would like to close in prayer and allow them to do so.

Appendix A – Station Cards

Station 1: “For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink.”

1. In our world today, when do we see people hungry and thirsty? Is it only in other countries?
2. When do we have opportunities to actually do something to help these people?
3. Are there organizations in your community or people who you know that are gifted at filling this need? Who are they and what do they do?
4. In what way could we as a youth group partner with an organization to get involved? OR in what ways can you as an individual make a difference? Use the chart paper to jot down a few ideas.

Station 2: I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home.

1. In our own lives, when do we see people who are strangers? Or who are new to a setting? Or new to a country?
2. When do we have the chance to be a friend to these people? Do you take the opportunity to be a friend?
3. Are there organizations in your community or people who you know that are gifted at doing this? Who are they and what do they do?
4. In what ways could you as a youth group partner with an organization to get involved? OR in what ways can you as an individual make a difference? Think specifically. Use the chart paper to jot down a few ideas.

Station 3: I was naked, and you gave me clothing.

1. Whoa! We don't see too many naked people on our streets today, but when do we see people without access to clothes or in need in this way?
2. Have you ever had the chance to do something to help? What did you do?
3. Are there organizations in your community or people who you know that are awesome at filling this need? Who are they and what do they do?
4. In what way could you as a youth group partner with an organization to get involved? OR in what ways can you as an individual make a difference? Use the chart paper to jot down a few ideas.

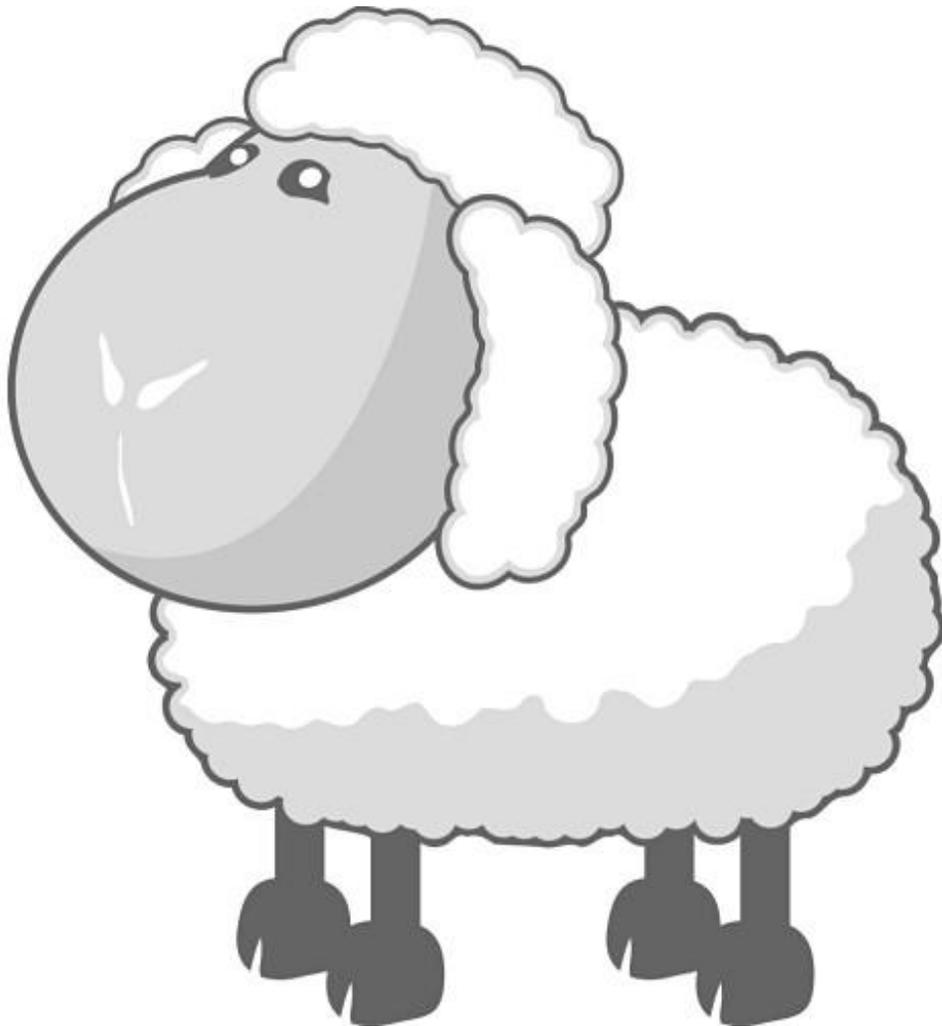
Station 4: I was sick, and you cared for me.

1. How often do we see people sick and in need of care – physically, emotionally, or spiritually? Where? Are there times of year that we see this more often? Why?
2. Have you ever taken the opportunity to help someone in need in this way? How? If not, how might you, personally?
3. Are there organizations in your community or people who you know that are gifted at filling this need? Who are they and what do they do?
4. In what way could you as a youth group partner with an organization to get involved? OR in what ways can you as an individual make a difference? Use the chart paper to jot down a few ideas.

Station 5: I was in prison, and you visited me.

1. Are we able to visit prison today? Do you know anyone who visits people in prison? What other places could be seen like prisons in that people are isolated and without community?
2. When do we have opportunities to actually go and visit these people?
3. Are there organizations in your community or people who you know that are gifted at filling this need? Who are they and what do they do?
4. In what way could you as a youth group partner with an organization to get involved? OR in what ways can you as an individual make a difference? (Use the chart paper to jot down a few ideas.)

APPENDIX B – Sheep image for projecting and tracing



Source: http://www.e-celebrities.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/creohn_Sheep_in_gray.jpg